IN BOMB-SHATTERED LOUVAIN BRITAIN'S SOLDIERS AWAIT THE NAZIS

Louvain, which suffered so cruelly during the last war, was the object of fierce Nazi attacks at the end of the second week in May. It was held by the B.E.F., and above is a British anti-tank gun in a sandbag emplacement in front of one of the houses that had been bombed by the enemy. The troops fought with the greatest bravery and, as General Ironside said of the men of Namsos, they were not driven out but ordered out. **See also page 579.**

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

Rage and Fury of the 'Battle of the Bulge'

Opening on May 14, what came to be described as the "Battle of the Bulge" soon developed into a conflict of earth-shaking importance. Here we tell of its initial phase, up to the end of the first week's fighting.

"The fate of our country and that of our Allies, the destinies of the world, depend on the battle now in progress." So began an Order of the Day issued by General Gamelin on Friday, May 17. "Any soldier who cannot advance," continued the Allied Generalissimo, "should allow himself to be killed rather than abandon that part of our national soil which has been entrusted to him. As always in grave hours of our history, the order today is 'Conquer or die.' We must conquer." Grave words, but not too grave for the crisis which in the course of a few short days had developed in the Western battle zone.

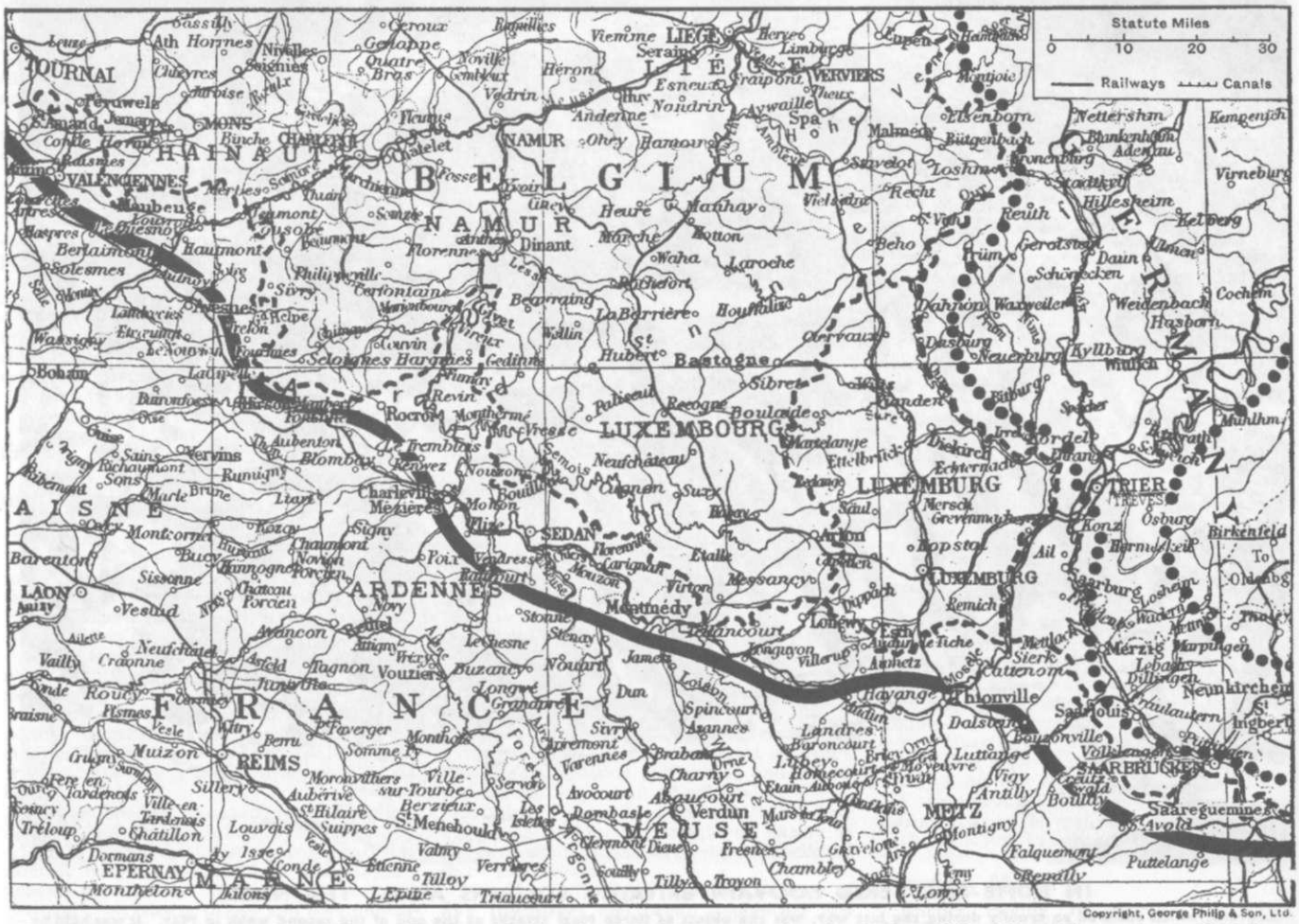
At the beginning of the week the German thrust seemed to be centred in Belgium, whose army, in touch with the Dutch remnant to the north, strongly supported by the British Expeditionary Force in the centre and closely linked with the French on the right, was slowly retreating on the line Antwerp-Brussels-Namur. Suddenly on Tuesday, May 14, a new and a far greater battle developed to the south in the Ardennes. "On the Meuse south of Namur," ran the French war communiqué issued at 10.30 on the night of that fateful day, "the Germans have attempted to cross the river at several points. We have launched counter-attacks and the fighting continues, more especially in the region of Sedan, where the enemy is making a momentous effort with furious obstinacy and at the expense of heavy casualties."

Onslaught on an Unprecedented Scale

Soon it was apparent that the French line from Montmédy, where the deep underground works of the Maginot Line terminate, to Maubeuge was cracking; indeed, at several points the line was actually pierced, and through the gap poured German armoured columns consisting of vast numbers of tanks, their way blasted open by a veritable armada of warplanes. For an onslaught on such an unprecedented scale the French defenders were unprepared; their ranks, apparently, had been depleted by the dispatch of their reserves to aid the threatened front in Belgium to the north. Despite the most desperate efforts to hold up the attack and to establish a fresh front, the German onrush continued with unabated fury. In a comparatively few hours General Corap's Ninth Army had met disaster, a 90-mile front had been overrun, and like a three-pronged fork the Germans plunged towards the very heart of France.

A French War Office spokesman described the onslaught as "a great hurricane." The French infantry, he declared, had resisted admirably, but, faced at certain points by an overwhelming mass of tank units, they had been obliged to give way. Once through the gap, the tanks spread out fanwise in all directions until the battle took on what one of the French war communiqués described as "the aspect of a terrible mêlée." Here and there there was fierce hand-to-hand fighting, and for the first time in history there were battles on a grand scale between the tanks of the rival armies (see page 572).

By now, however, it was too late to effect real consolidation, and for several days more the French were compelled to fall back, abandoning town after town

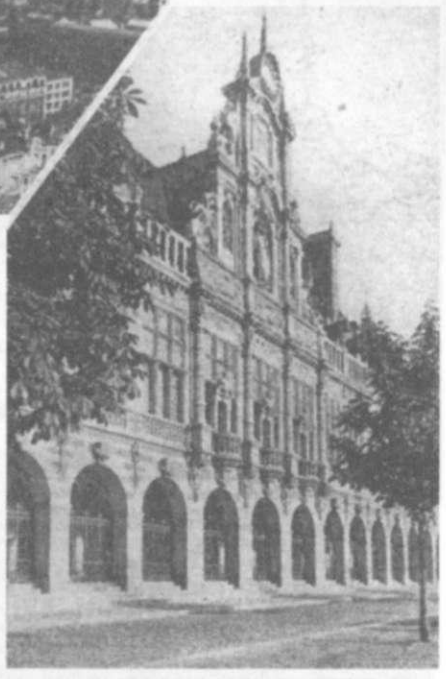


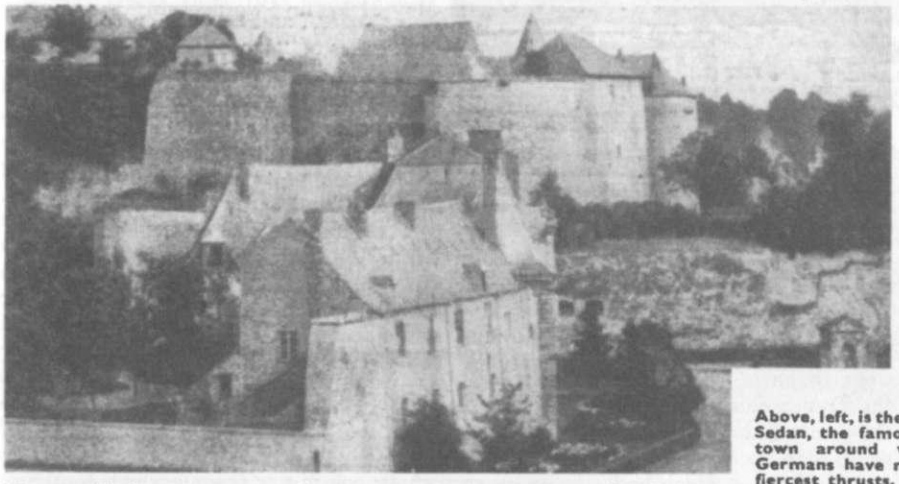
This map shows those areas of North-Eastern France and Belgium in which fighting was taking place in the middle of May. The continuous black line marks the Maginot Line, but it should be understood that the deep underground works end at Montmédy and beyond that the Line consists only of a series of concrete defence works on the surface. The dotted line shows the Siegfried Line; the frontiers are indicated by a broken line.

Again They Fall Beneath the Heel of the Boche

Brussels, the great capital of a great little country, is here seen from the tower of the Hôtel de Ville. On August 20, 1914, the city fell to the Kaiser's hosts. Twenty-five years later, on the night of May 16-17, 1940, the B.E.F. withdrew to positions west of Brussels and the Germans again entered the city.

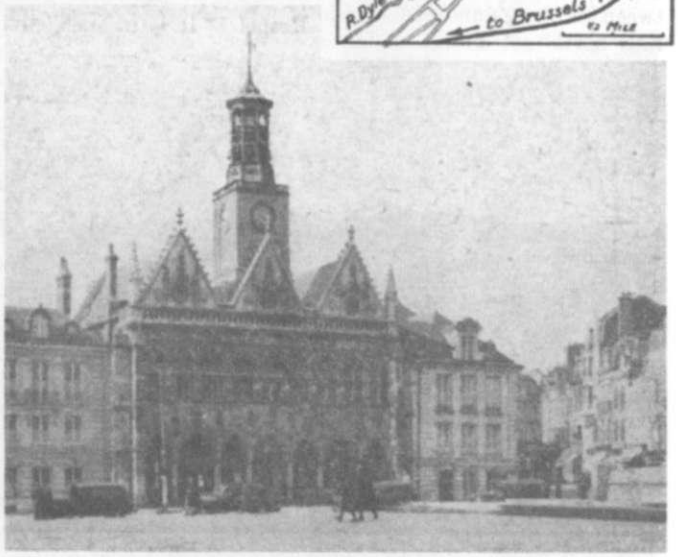
Louvain's world-famous University Library (below) was destroyed by the Germans in August 1914, when thousands of precious books were burnt. The Library was rebuilt after the last war, but in May 1940 was reported again burnt.





Above, left, is the château of Sedan, the famous French town around which the Germans have made their fiercest thrusts. The town was in German hands from the beginning of the last war until just before the Armistice, when French and American troops drove the enemy out of it. Right is a plan of Louvain, showing the River Dyle, the New University and the Library. In this area heavy street fighting between the British and Germans took place.

BUT a little over twenty-five years ago these towns of Belgium and France heard the tramp of the Kaiser's hosts, and today they resound to the rattle of Nazi tanks. In the last war Brussels escaped almost unscathed while Louvain suffered terribly, its greatest loss being the library, with its irreplaceable collection of early books and MSS, which was burnt by the Germans. This time Brussels has been bombed, and it was reported by an American war correspondent that the library of Louvain had once more suffered destruction.



Arras, of which the Grand' Place is seen left, was captured by the Germans on May 21, 1940 and recaptured by the French next day. Arras gave its name to the great battle in the spring of 1917, while St. Quentin, whose market square and Town Hall are shown right, also felt the weight of the great Nazi thrust towards the Somme. Both towns, too, carry poignant memories of the last war, in the square of St. Quentin British soldiers, exhausted in the retreat from Mons, slept on the cobble stones.

Photos, L.N.A., Keystone, E.N.A. and A. J. Insall, Copyright A.P. Ltd.

France's Line Pierced by the Enemy Thrust

This map shows successive stages of the Nazi thrust from May 13 to May 21-22. In the early days of the offensive the advance had at no point been stabilized and the positions indicated on each date must be taken as approximate, showing only the lines of the to-and-fro struggle.

to the hated enemy. The real war had come at last to the Western Front—the real war, not of fixed positions, but of a struggle in the open.

There was no line ; nothing, indeed, in the nature of an established front. Over the French countryside roamed at large 2,500, or it may be 3,000, German tanks—estimated to constitute at least half of the enemy's tank divisions—in individual units, in small detachments, or in great masses. Furthermore, as the battle developed, tens of thousands of Nazi motor-cyclists, armed to the teeth, were dispatched to harry and ravage far in front of the main fight.

By the end of the week a great bulge had been formed in the Allied line between Maubeuge and Sedan, reaching out into north-east France as far as Rethel on the Aisne. And the bulge was getting bigger day by day, almost hour by hour. Drastic measures were called for if disaster were to be averted. Mr. Churchill went to Paris, where in conference with the French chiefs means were devised for the common defence. The French armies were regrouped ; and Britain's magnificent air force, which had already established its mastery over the Nazis, was flung into the fight against the ravaging tanks. In the north the Allied line was falling back in order to conform with the new situation, and Germany was jubilant over the capture of Brussels and Antwerp.

But though the situation was grave, as M. Reynaud admitted in his broadcast to the nation on the evening of Saturday, May 18, it was by no means desperate. "It is in such circumstances as these," he declared, "that the French people show what is in them." He announced that he had called to his side Marshal Pétain, the victor of Verdun; and on the following evening the world was electrified by the news that another of the triumphant figures of the Great War, General Weygand, had been appointed to the Supreme Command in place of General Gamelin. His appointment was widely hailed as an augury of victory, for Weygand was Foch's closest collaborator in 1918 when the German hordes thundering on the way to Paris were halted, and at length chased across the frontier.

But at that moment it needed faith and vision to talk or think of victory. When M. Reynaud faced the Senate on May 21 his first words were "the country is in danger," and he went on to tell how by a series of "incredible mistakes" the bridges over the Meuse had not been destroyed, and when across these bridges there passed the German "Panzer" (iron-clad) divisions they encountered nothing but French units who were "scattered, ill-cadred, and badly trained." With the total disorganization of General Corap's Ninth Army the hinge of the French army had been broken. The Premier went on to tell how a huge breach had been opened in the front, and that already the Germans had penetrated as far as Arras and Amiens. "The truth is," he went on, "that our classic conception of the conduct of war has come up against a new conception"—one which combines the massive use of heavy armoured divisions in cooperation with aeroplanes and the creation of disorder in the rear by means of parachute raids.

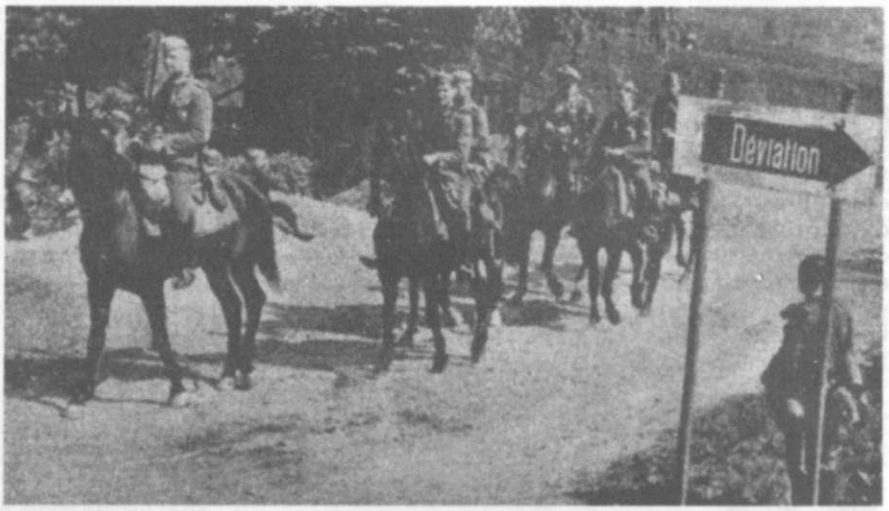
As that black day dragged on there came news of still more disasters. General Giraud, newly-appointed commander of the French Ninth Army, was said to be taken prisoner by the Germans with the whole of his staff, and to the towns which had been reached by their advanced mechanized

While a war of movement was being fought in Belgium and North-Eastern France by what was described by a French commentator as a "confusion of tanks and aeroplanes," there was also activity on the Maginot Line proper, where intense artillery duels took place. In this photograph, taken just in front of the Maginot Line, one of these is in progress. In the foreground is the very first line of defence—a barbed wire entanglement.
Photo, Keystone

Thousands in Flight from the Nazi Hordes

forces was added Abbeville, only 15 miles from the English Channel. Arras, where only a few days before had been Lord Gort's headquarters, was the scene of fierce street fighting, and Amiens was largely in flames. (Arras, indeed, was stated on the 22nd to have been recaptured, and so fluid was the situation that important fighting developed in the Cambrai-Vallenceunes area, 25 miles behind Arras itself.) In a huge area of northern France not a building of any description remained undamaged, as the invader systematically destroyed all that came within his path. The Channel ports on which the British Army was now withdrawing—in unbroken order and in good heart—were being heavily bombed.

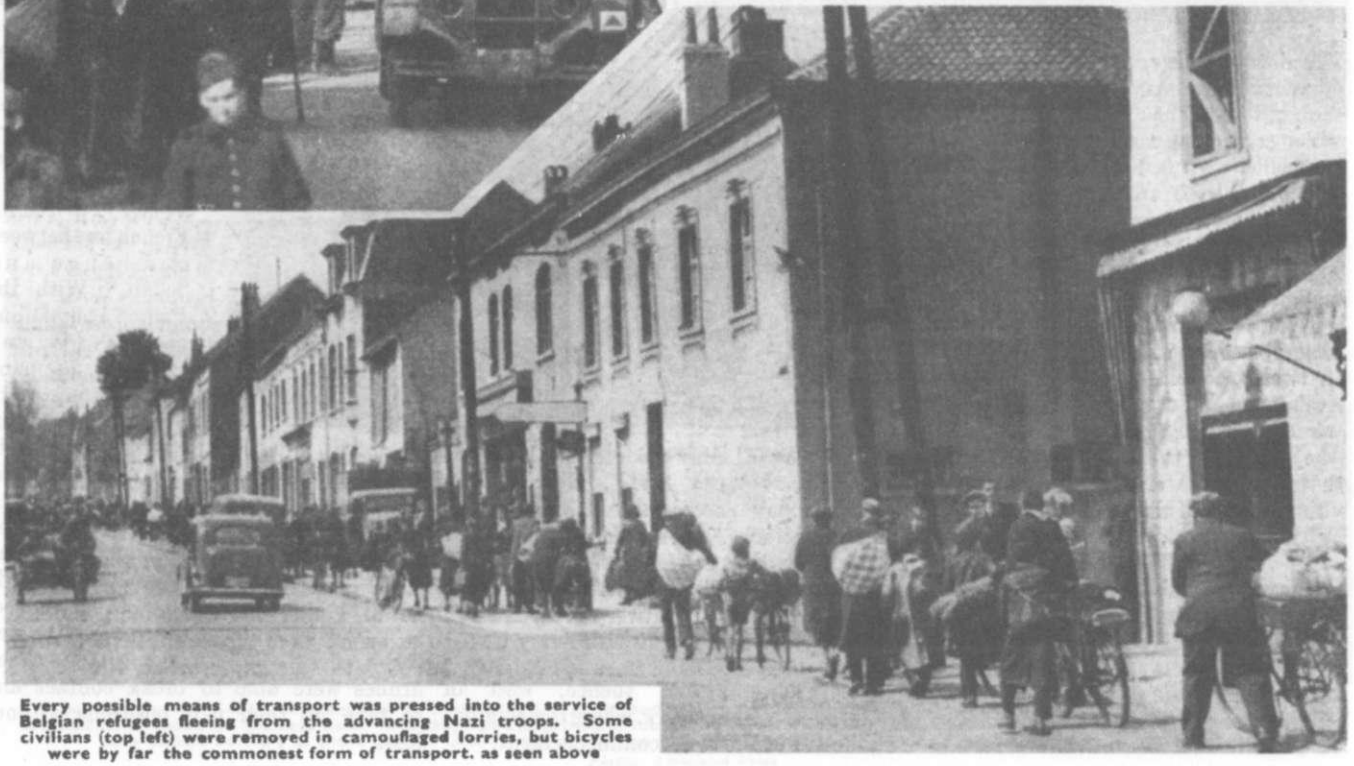
It was worse than 1914, worse even than 1918. It was the hour of supreme crisis, the hour in which the tick of every second would have its echo through untold centuries.



The photograph above was published in an Italian paper with the title "Towards The Channel?" It shows an advance guard of the German Army crossing the border of Luxemburg on the morning of May 10. From here they advanced through Longwy to Sedan in France. Though mechanization has largely ousted cavalry, they are evidently still playing an important part.

Photos, Topical, Keystone and British Official: Crown Copyright

Amid the tangled wreckage and debris of what was once a Belgian hospital, troops search for casualties. Bombing of open towns must inevitably result in such catastrophies as this.



Every possible means of transport was pressed into the service of Belgian refugees fleeing from the advancing Nazi troops. Some civilians (top left) were removed in camouflaged lorries, but bicycles were by far the commonest form of transport, as seen above

British Army's Great Stand at Louvain

Bitter must have been the disappointment of the men of the B.E.F. when, after making so fine a stand at Louvain, they had to fall back to conform with the battle line to the south. Here we tell of this opening phase of the campaign.

ONLY a few hours after Belgium's eastern frontier was crossed by the German hordes there began on the west another invasion. But the men of the British Expeditionary Force who clattered past the swiftly raised barriers came not as conquerors but as friends and allies in an hour of desperate need, and as such they were received with transports of joy, just as were their fathers a generation ago.

As in the last war, British soldiers in France and Belgium lightened the burdens of thousands of refugees rendered homeless by German bombardment. A British soldier, left, assists an aged couple through the smouldering streets of a Belgian town. British troops, below, are seen making themselves comfortable during the Allied occupation of Louvain—a welcome rest between strenuous bouts of fighting.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

The date—Friday, May 10—is one to be remembered. All through that day, the next and the next, the British advance continued, and the Belgian roads were packed with fast-moving convoys of lorries laden with troops, of tanks and armoured cars, of guns big and small. By the evening of the first day of the war some of our mechanized cavalry detachments had secured the bridges over the Dyle at Louvain, representing an advance of some 75 miles in little more than twelve hours.

At dawn the next morning they pushed on cautiously until, about ten miles east of the old town, they came into contact with units of the enemy. There was a certain amount of skirmishing by cavalry—by which word, in 1940, tanks are meant—and then the British retired to the line they had established near Louvain. It was not long before the Nazi airmen discovered their arrival, and their positions were heavily bombed from time to time. Meanwhile, the bulk of the British Army in Belgium was rushed up and took up its position behind the forward zone.

"The successful advance of the B.E.F. into Belgium in conjunction with the French forces," read a communiqué issued from British G.H.Q. on May 13, "is continuing as planned. Minor encounters between our cavalry and the enemy have ended to our advantage." Thus, within three days of entering Belgium, the British Army had taken up the positions allotted to it by the Allied High Command.

The communiqué issued at 1 o'clock on the morning of May 16 stated, briefly enough, that "the B.E.F. after hard fighting today successfully held serious German attacks." At this time the Allied front, though essentially fluid, ran from the Dutch islands of Walcheren and South Beveland past Antwerp to Louvain on the Dyle (where the British Army was in force) to the Sambre between Namur and Charleroi and thence, west of Mézières, to Montmédy, where the Maginot Line proper has its commencement.

In the hard fighting referred to in the communiqué, British troops with French and Belgians on their flanks were heavily engaged in repulsing tank attacks of the most violent and obstinate description directed against Brussels. Louvain was in the very thick of the combat, and almost its only inhabitants were the British soldiers who turned its buildings into strong points and dodged through its streets the bombs and shells.

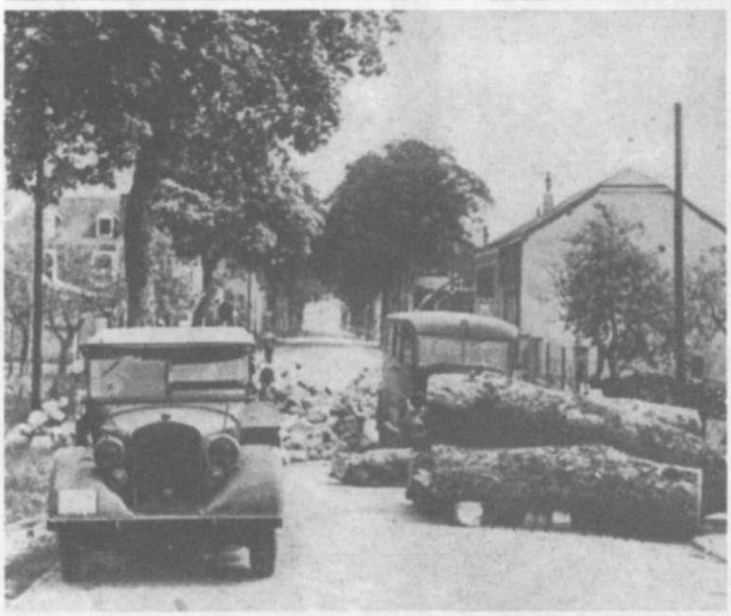
Early on the morning of May 17 the British G.H.Q. announced that "the B.E.F. are in contact with the enemy and fighting is in progress. Attacks on Louvain have been repulsed." Within the preceding twenty-four hours there had been heavy fighting in the town itself as the Germans made violent attempts to dislodge the British. At one time they succeeded in seizing the railway station, but were driven out at the point of the bayonet. There was one famous Irish regiment which fought the enemy from platform to platform while the broken glass crashed on their heads as the Germans threw grenades through the roof. Sniping in the suburbs went on all day and tanks and dive bombers delivered frequent assaults. All were repulsed.

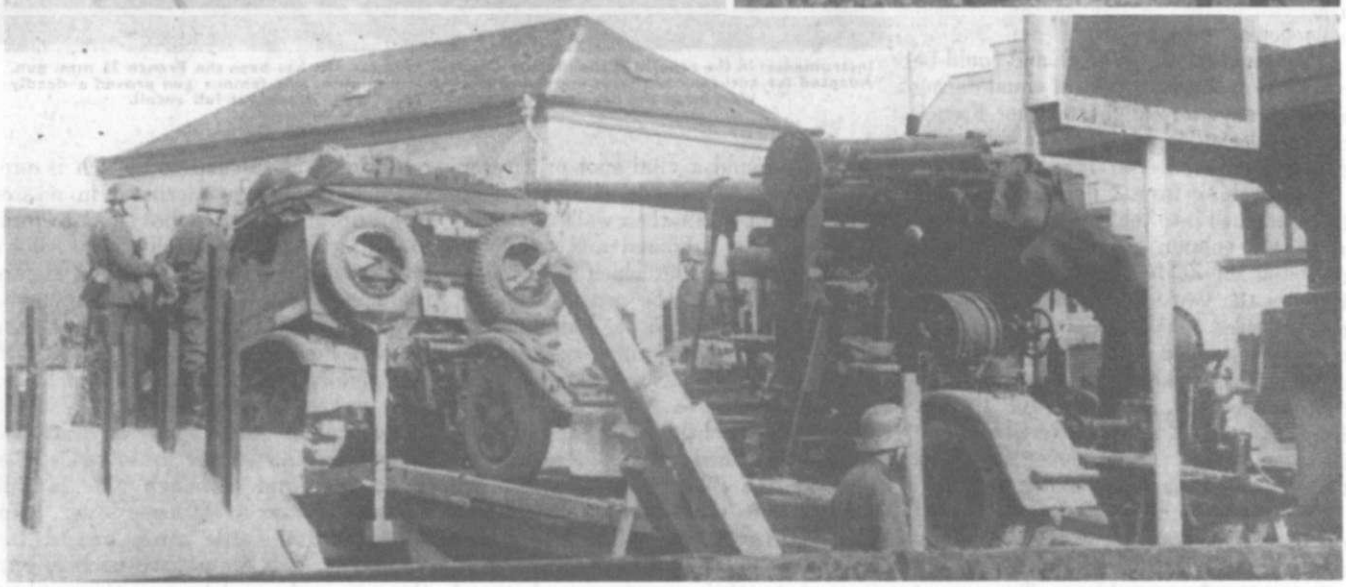
But though the Germans could no more than dent the British front, a withdrawal soon became necessary as a result of the terrific German attack on the French line between Maubeuge and Sedan. With the French army falling back, the Allied High Command found it necessary to avoid the serious risk of being left in the air. So the withdrawal was effected under cover of night in good order. Brussels and Antwerp had to be abandoned, and a new line was established some 30 miles to the west of the Belgian capital. The Germans were able to do little to hinder the operation; indeed, so extensive were the demolitions carried out by the engineers that the Allied armies were able to break contact and to take up their new positions without loss.

The Nazis' First Blow Fell on Little Luxemburg

When the German army marched into Luxemburg they found only empty streets. They had professedly come there as "protectors," but uncertain of their welcome they were fully armed, lest the small nation that they had overwhelmed should put up some resistance. These are the first German photos of the great offensive to be received in London.

As Luxemburg had no defences the Nazi invaders were able to build pontoon bridges across the river which separates the Grand Duchy from Germany without hindrance. Below is one of these bridges supported by rubber pontoons. It could carry troops and all light forms of transport.





The peaceful people of the Duchy knew little of the realities of war and when the first armoured units rumbled through the villages they saw modern armaments in action for the first time. But they had but primitive ideas of resistance, and along the roads on which the enemy advanced they put up such useless barriers as those centre. Above, heavy German anti-aircraft guns are crossing into Luxemburg over a wooden ramp.

Photos, Associated Press

So Began the Greatest Tank Battle in History

Several times of late the communiqués have reported "cavalry in action," but we must beware of thinking of 1940 in the terms of 1914. The cavalry which, as told below, crashed into action at Sedan on May 14, and brought the war into the very heart of France, charged not on horseback but in massive tanks.

WHERE France faces Germany she is protected by the massive bulwark of the Maginot Line. From near Longwy, however, where not far away across the frontier is the junction of Luxemburg, and Belgium, to Dunkirk on the English Channel, the French defences consist of a series of small concrete field works resembling the pill boxes with which the plain of Flanders was dotted in the last war, but much more numerous and in far greater depth. It was hardly surprising, then, that it was near here, between Montmédy and Sedan—name of ominous memory in French history—that the Germans for the third time in seventy years invaded French territory. In 1870 and in 1914 their onslaught was delivered by great masses of cavalry; in 1940 the way of their advance was blasted open by swarms of aeroplanes, in whose wake moved vast masses of iron cavalry—hundreds of tanks both large and small.

Like some phalanx of old, the German tanks thundered into France so closely packed that many of them were only six feet apart from their neighbours on either side, in front and behind. As they came on at a speed of between 20 and 30 miles an hour many of them were stopped by the anti-tank guns or blown to pieces by mines or shells. Such was their number and such their mass that they literally crashed their way through the French lines at three places and penetrated the forward zone until the front was disintegrated for ninety miles, from Sedan to Maubeuge. Then, spreading out fanwise in all directions, they caused a general mêlée of battle in the fortified zone behind.

The situation was critical, and could be retrieved only by a stroke of equal daring and of superior might. The French commander ordered one of his mechanized divisions to counter-attack.

Approaching from a flank, the French tanks crashed into the side of the German armoured column while it was still rumbling on at full speed. The clash between the two forces—accounts had it that between 1,000 and 2,000 tanks were actually engaged in the action—was described as appalling. A dispatch rider told Mr. George Millar, of the "Daily Express," that "it was a terrible sight, inhuman, incredible. I never imagined there could be such a fiendish noise."

"In the first charge," he said, "our men had the advantage of the hill. They came down at full throttle and they did not swerve for anything. Trees went cracking and flying. When they met the enemy they carried right on. I saw one of ours hit a big German tank full in the side. The German rolled over. Our men thundered on."

So swift was the onset of the *chars d'assaut* that the German tanks were unable to turn to meet their attackers. The hard-pressed Allied infantry sheltering in their roughly-dug gun-pits cheered the French as they went by, and with excited disregard for danger watched with amazed eyes the death grapple of these iron monsters. Tank engaged tank or hunted it across the bomb-torn ground. Scores were put out of action as the anti-tank rifles found a vital spot or a caterpillar drive was ripped off.

Instrumental in the repulse of the massed German tank attacks has been the French 75 mm. gun. Adapted for anti-tank purposes and firing 25 rounds a minute, this famous gun proved a deadly weapon to the heaviest Nazi tanks. This "75" is seen at full recoil.

Photo, Planet News

Behind and within their walls of armour the tank crews laboured and fought in conditions to describe which in adequate measure would tax the pen of a Dante. Half-cooked by the heat, half-poisoned by the fumes of their motors, deafened by the clang of machinery and by the roar of battle—to which their own machine-guns and three- and six-pounders made their contribution—they held on until, for the time being at least, the Germans were worsted and slowly withdrew on their main body. The battle over, the French tanks, hot and steaming, returned to their quarters in battered villages; and through the iron doors emerged smoke-blackened figures, wounded some of them, whose first act was to stretch their cramped limbs.

On that day and on every day since the war of movement came again to the Western Front the tanks on either side have played a commanding part. The Germans in particular have used their tank army (which contained many units of a more massive and far less vulnerable design than they had put into the field before) with a total unconcern for the waste of material and human life.

This, be it noted, not through madness induced by the fury of battle, but as the result of cold calculation, which is prepared to see tanks sacrificed in masses to fill up pits and trenches so as to form a platform across which their fellows may crash their way to victory. Before the first week of the campaign in the Low Countries was over M. Spaak, the Belgian Foreign Minister, revealed that at several points on the front which had been taken and re-taken there were literally great scrap heaps of destroyed tanks. But the German armoured masses moved on, and although the famous French seventy-fives firing over open sights at 100 yards range caused the columns to halt for a space or here and there to make a detour, within a short time the heart of France heard the rumble of their approach.

Machine Age Monsters Roar on to the Attack

In the "Battle of the Bulge" the German mechanized units were repeatedly slowed down by all possible means. The enemy's ever-lengthening communication lines provided a ready target for Allied bombers, which seriously menaced German supplies The photographs in this page, received in London on May 21, were the first of the great battle to be released and were taken by the Cinema Section of the French army. Above a line of French tanks advance to the attack.

THE German heavy tanks, aptly named "travelling fortresses," have played an all-important part in the Nazis' onslaught upon Northern France. Employed in enormous numbers, the "heavies" relied on swarms of dive bombers acting as an advance striking force. The 'planes blasted obstacles ahead in order to clear a way for the tanks. They were followed by heavier machines, and in their turn came the infantry and consolidating troops.

The desperate clashes between opposing forces of French and German tanks across the battlefields of Northern France, on a scale hitherto unknown, opened a new phase in modern warfare. Beyond the barricade of trees and branches piled across this village street in the photograph above is seen a German motorized column held up by a detachment of French tanks, one of which stands sentinel in the foreground. Right centre, a medium French tank is going into action.

Photos, Associated Press and Keystone

'Day by Day Come Stories of Matchless Courage'

After long months of waiting the R.A.F., on the invasion of the Low Countries by the Nazis, was called on to play its vitally important part. Here are a few of what the Air Ministry itself described as "stories of matchless courage" in the bombing of enemy armoured columns, troops and communications in Holland, Belgium and France.

WITHIN half an hour of the appeal by the Belgian and the Dutch Governments for help, early on May 10, British aircraft were taking part in the defence of the Netherlands. Immediate aid was given by the bombing of Dutch aerodromes that the Nazis had captured on or near the coast. One of the Bomber Command 'planes, reconnoitring only 20 feet above the ground near Leiden, was attacked by a Ju 88, and put one of the enemy's two engines out of action; a second British bomber came on the scene and joined in, with the result that the Junkers was sent down in flames.

Later that day our bombers with their escort of Blenheim fighters destroyed nine German troop-carrying aircraft on the Dutch coast, eight miles N. of The Hague. First our bombers hit and set on fire two of the troop carriers on the beach; then the Blenheims formed line astern and dived from 5,000 feet, riddling the enemy machines with 18,000 rounds from their machine-guns. One Blenheim made a forced landing on the sand, and the rest did not leave until they had made sure the pilot and crew were uninjured.

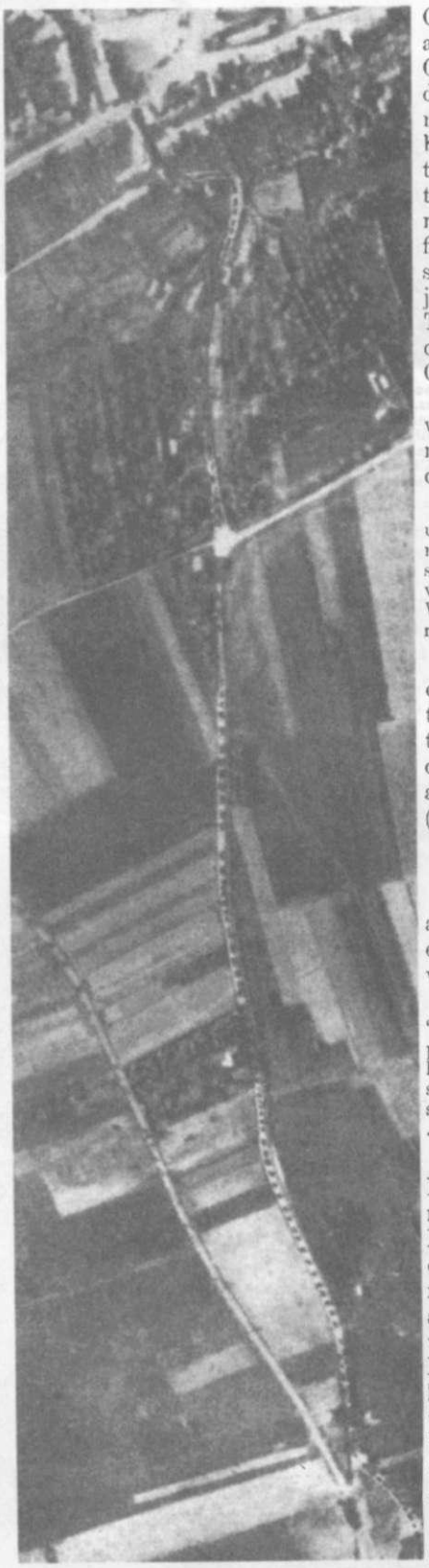
Twenty Nazi Machines Ablaze

Attacking the Rotterdam port at Waalhaven, in German hands, a strong force of British bombers began at 9 p.m. a series of raids that lasted nearly six hours. When in the early hours of May 11 the R.A.F. drew off, fires were raging on all parts of the aerodrome. Through the dense smoke that obscured the ruined hangars and bomb-pitted runways, no fewer than 20 four-engined aircraft could be seen ablaze.

Concurrently, other R.A.F. units harassed German columns and troop concentrations between the Rhine and the Meuse. On the night of the 10th strong enemy forces were seen advancing across the Rhine towards the Dutch frontier. Our aircraft bombed and hit the bridge over the Rhine at Wesel, and also attacked a troop column at the approaches. Important railway and road junctions and bridges were bombed.

Immediately following the German invasion the Advanced Air Striking Force in France began to play its important part. It was the occasion which they had been patiently awaiting for months, and they took the fullest advantage of it.

During the morning a mechanized column was located south of Luxemburg by an R.A.F. section of low-dive bombers. Despite intense fire from pom-poms and machine-guns, the troop column was bombed by this and a second section. Two other flights severely punished a German column of all arms which was about to cross the N.E. corner of the German-Luxemburg border. Later that day three of our Hurricanes encountered, near Vouzières, a formation of 30 Junkers bombers with escort of Messerschmitt 110 twin-engined cannon-gunned fighters. The three Hurricanes attacked, and for twenty minutes there was a hurly-burly "dog-fight"; three Messerschmitts had been shot down when our gallant trio was joined by other aircraft of their squadron. Two more German fighters were sent crashing down, and then the entire German formation turned tail and fled.



Here are three miles of enemy motorized vehicles photographed by the R.A.F. as they travelled southwards to Sedan shortly after its capture. At the top is the village of St. Menges. At the bottom the column makes a detour round a crater at the road junction.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

Throughout the following day the task went on. The captain of one R.A.F. machine that took part in the bombing of roads behind the German line said:

> Our target was a cross-road that was being used by long columns of German reinforcements. . . . Our actual target was covered by a sheet of broken cloud, but through the opening we could see a long line of transport on the move. We dropped our bombs, which burst right on the roads.

In spite of intense A.A. fire and fighter opposition the R.A.F. succeeded in destroying both the road bridges at Maastricht, thus dislocating the communications of enemy mechanized forces advancing in Belgium and Luxemburg (see photo in page 581).

The Barrage Was Terrific

An account by a formation leader of an expedition of this sort states that enemy A.A. fire began when the bombers were 20 miles from their target.

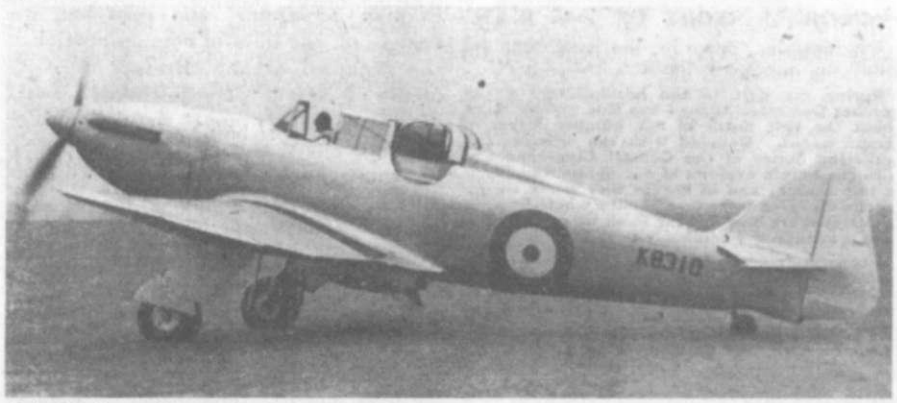
> "That didn't worry us much," he continued, "but as we got nearer the target the Germans put up a terrific barrage of fire, the heaviest I have yet met. Black bursts of fire completely surrounded us. Below, the bridges could be seen standing out, quite clearly, in the sunlight, . . . and we got in some pretty good shots."

The heaviest air attack made by the R.A.F. was carried out on Wednesday night (May 15-16) east of the Rhine. Purely military objectives were singled out. Many tons of bombs were dropped, road and rail communications being attacked at many points. The damage was extensive and covered a wide area. Long-range heavy bombers of the Whitley, Wellington and Hampden types took part. No opposition was offered by enemy fighters, but the ground defences were very active. Only one of our aircraft failed to return.

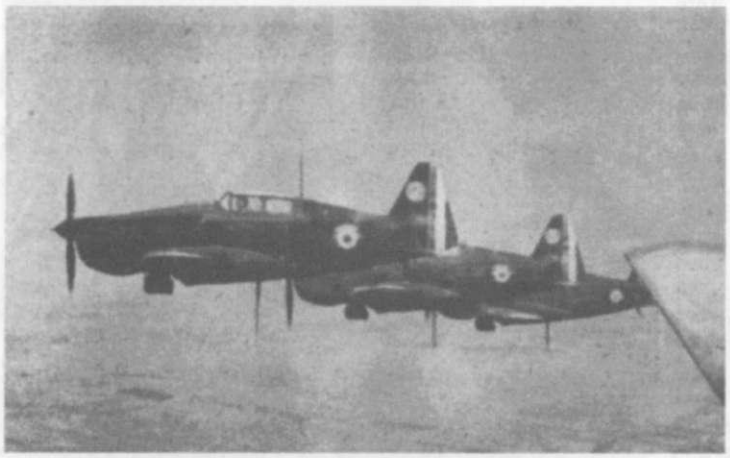
Simultaneously the night operation was carried out by our bombers to assist the infantry in countering an enemy attack near Turnhout and Dinant.

On the nights of May 17 and 18 Royal Air Force bombers hit back at the enemy over a wide area in Germany and German-

Allied Air Forces Hit Back Hard and True



Britain's latest fighter, the Boulton-Paul Defiant, went into action for the first time during operations against the Nazi invaders of Holland and proved itself against a Junkers 88. A novel feature is the power-operated gun turret.



This patrol of French pursuit aeroplanes is keeping watch over a section of the Western Front. Right, the crew of a Dornier aeroplane brought down in France were arrested by George Muir, a keeper of one of the British war cemeteries, here seen sitting on left of tail of German machine.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright, L.N.A., and Planet News

AFTER long months of waiting, trained to the top notch of efficiency, the pilots and crews of the Advanced Air Striking Force were eager for the chance to hit back at the enemy, who had made a sudden swoop on the Low Countries, timed to coincide with his long-expected attack against the French and British along the Western Front.

In circle, the burning wreckage of a German Heinkel brought down in France by the Royal Air Force. In the foreground is part of the undercarriage. Simultaneously with their invasion of Holland and Belgium the Germans made a great thrust against Northern France. It found the R.A.F. ready. A sergeant pilot of a Hurricane, here being congratulated by his comrades of the squadron, brought down his first enemy machine at 7 a.m., and followed up this by bagging a Heinkel at midday.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

'Men of the R.A.F. Saved France and England'

occupied territory in France. For five hours on Friday night, May 17–18, Whitley bombers in relays dropped high explosive and incendiary bombs on the oil depots at Bremen. After a direct hit on a large petrol reservoir flames shot up to a height of nearly 2,000 feet, and in the words of a sergeant pilot, "it so lit up the sky that even at 10,000 feet one could have read the smallest print." That same night Hampden aircraft bombed oil depots at Hamburg, and the flames could be seen far away at Cuxhaven, almost 60 miles distant. On Saturday night our bombers raided Hanover and destroyed oil tanks there. Further damage to the oil tanks at Bremen and Hamburg was done by Hudson aircraft.

As was to be expected at places of such extreme importance to the enemy, an active and vigilant defence was encountered by our men, who had to run the gauntlet of massed searchlight and balloon barrages, besides highly organized anti-aircraft artillery. Only military objectives were attacked by the R.A.F., and when these were unable to be located the bombers withdrew without dropping their missiles. Sometimes pilots on reaching the target found it obscured by the haze and smoke from a previous bombing; on other occasions the weather conditions prevented location.

The leader of the Hamburg raiders said of the barrage: "It seemed to be just one continual stream. . . . We could see the barrage breaking all around us, but we managed to keep a straight course at the right moment and to drop our bombs with accuracy. When we arrived over our objectives we saw an enormous fire blazing. The flames were so brilliant that they lit up the sky and countryside for about 50 miles all round. When we left there were two more fires burning—right on the target."

Experiences varied, however, and another pilot got off more easily. "Most of the gunfire kept away from us," he said, "and so did the searchlights. I think the ground crews were too busy attending to other aircraft in our section to have any time for us. By the light of the moon we were able to get a clear view of our target. We did a run-up, took our time about it, dropped our bombs, and came home unmolested." When a Hampden bomber got over its objective, the pilot found it ablaze, so he flew around for some minutes "to be sure we had arrived at the right address." Then he aimed his bombs and watched small fires break out that finally coalesced into one huge conflagration.

While the Whitleys and Hampdens were engaged at cutting off enemy fuel supplies at the source, Wellington and Whitley heavy bombers were attacking German aerodromes and road and rail bridges on the lines of communication in the occupied areas. Bridges over the Meuse at Namur were destroyed; south of the town heavy bombs were dropped on a bridge over the Sambre. Railways in the neighbourhood of Namur were put out of use; and bombs were dropped along the Beauraing-Givet road. On the same road an R.A.F. pilot observed a German mechanized column over ten miles long, which he bombed and, diving to 700 feet, raked with his machine-guns.

These operations were not carried out without enemy opposition. Fighters were met several times, but proved no deterrent to our pilots. Thus a Hampden pilot who encountered a Messerschmitt 110 below him manoeuvred to bring the enemy into point-blank range. A burst from the rear gun of the Hampden hit one of the Messerschmitt's engines and the enemy went out of sight amid a shower of sparks. All the British machines returned.

The entire battle zone was patrolled by our aircraft. For example, two Blenheims patrolling the Dutch coast encountered a formation of three Heinkel 111s and three Messerschmitt 110s. The Blenheims immediately attacked and shot down two of the Messerschmitts. Fighter patrols over France and Belgium scored remarkable successes on May 18. Thus, near Brussels, a patrol of five Hurricanes shot down at least three and probably six Heinkel 111s. Eleven Hurricanes engaged 17 Messerschmitt 110s and destroyed six and damaged three more.

In a broadcast to the Empire on May 22, Mr. Duff Cooper, Minister of Information, said: "When the history of this battle comes to be written in calmer days, it will perhaps be recorded that the men of the R.A.F., men from far and wide in the British Commonwealth, saved France and England and all that we hold precious from the disaster of defeat."

'IMMORTAL STORY OF THE R.A.F.'

On Saturday, May 18, the King sent the following message to the R.A.F.:

During my visit to the headquarters of the Bomber Command today I was able to hear more about the epic deeds of our bomber forces in recent weeks. Coupled with the arduous and unceasing duties of the Coastal Command and with the heroic exploits of our fighter squadrons in this country and in France they make an immortal story—a story that fills the whole Empire, whose sons are now fighting in all three branches, with gratitude and admiration.

I congratulate the Royal Air Force with all my heart, and wish them good luck and continued success. The matchless spirit that has shown so clear an ascendancy over the enemy makes the final victory of the Allies doubly sure.

German Air Losses

To April 30, 1940

Total announced West Front, North Sea, Britain, Scandinavia	195
Unofficial estimate of 'planes damaged in Norway	200

Losses May 1—22

Published figures, Norway, Holland and West Front (including R.A.F. announcements)	322
R.A.F. and other estimates	978 to 1078
Grand Total	**1595 to 1695**

Note.—It is considered by many authorities that these figures are underestimates, and that the probable total is in the region of 2,000.

Fantastic estimates of British air losses were circulated by the enemy, and perhaps it was the success of our fighter defence that gave rise to them. The daily toll inflicted on the enemy was officially stated to be working out at more than three to one in favour of the British.

Three young pilots back from one of the many highly successful raids on German troop columns invading France. Two are New Zealanders.
British Official: Crown Copyright

Two Episodes in the Saga of the Air

The enemy's land armada advances under a protective cloud of 'planes. One column had a guard of 90 Dorniers and Junkers, which were themselves escorted by 21 Messerschmitts.

Eleven British Hurricanes went up to challenge this mighty aerial host. Eleven against 111—one against ten.

With fire spitting from their eight guns apiece the Hurricanes darted into the fray. Only four of them returned, but they returned as victors. The enemy squadrons, considerably thinned, had turned tail and fled.

The German tank column was now bereft of its air bodyguard. French tanks and armoured cars thundered down, what time a squadron of British bombers attacked the head and tail of the enemy column. The mêlée was terrific. It ended in the total destruction of the German column. The deathless courage of that little band of Hurricane pilots had brought the victory to pass.

R.A.F. bombers tried eight times to destroy an important bridge. Still it survived. Pilots and crews of four bombers asked permission to "finish it off." Their C.O. said "Carry on." They went; none returned. But the bridge was wrecked.

[Air Ministry Communiqué and "News Chronicle."]

Where Will They Lay Their Heads?

This refugee woman has just arrived at a London station after fleeing from Holland. Weeping and woebegone, she epitomizes the agony of the Dutch people during the Nazi invasion.

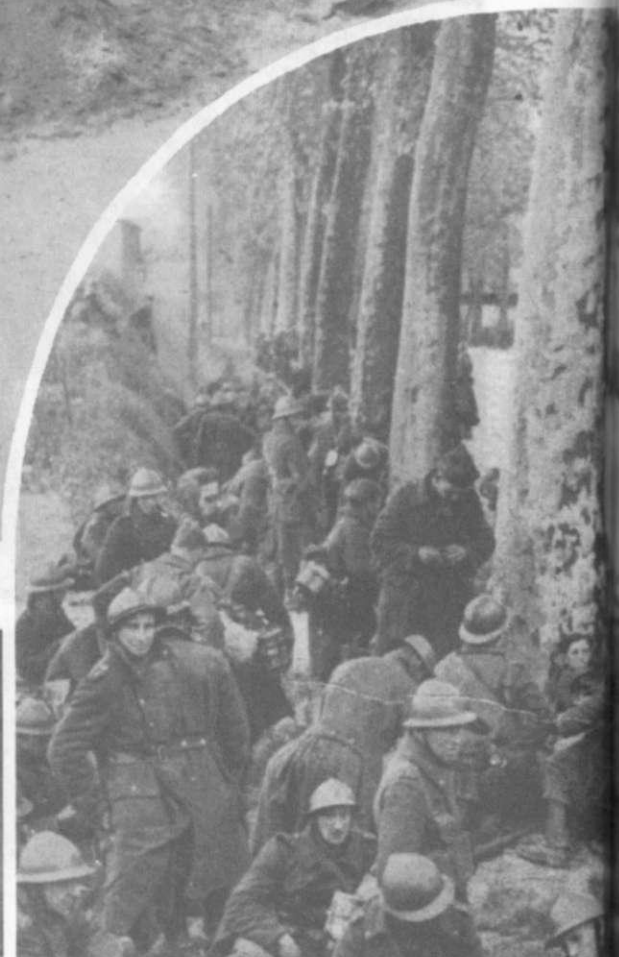
In Belgium and Holland, as in Poland, the terrorizing of the refugees fleeing from their homes appears to have been a systematic part of the German campaign. It produced such terribly pathetic scenes as that above. A Belgian refugee woman with two children, one in a perambulator, cowers behind a wall at the direction of a soldier, while a rain of Nazi bombs is dropping near by.

Among the most touching figures that have been seen at British ports and railway stations at which refugees have arrived are the small children, such as those centre left, clinging to their gas masks and dolls. Heartrending as an example of the horrors of war is the figure above—a blind man lost among the ruins of Namur.

Along the broad highways of Belgium thousands of refugees have tramped, salving what they could of their household goods. Left is one of the tragic little processions. Nuns and others are trudging wearily away from the oncoming invaders with a few personal possessions piled on a handcart.

Photos, Planet News and Keystone

Side by Side in France and Belgium the Allies Fought to Stem the Whole Forc



During the fierce Nazi thrust across Belgium and into France, the B.E.F. in Belgium withdrew to new positions to the west of Brussels, to protect themselves against a flank attack. Above is seen a group of Royal Irish Fusiliers at work in the front line. Below is shown a machine-gun shielded by sandbags at the corner of a shattered Belgian street.

The Dutch Did All That Brave Men Could Do

Swift and complete as was the disaster that overtook Holland, the Dutch put up a resistance which was all the more remarkable because they must have realized from the very beginning that they were due to go down before the incomparably massive German onslaught. Only when overwhelmed by the storm of steel and bomb, when Nazi parachutists and the local Fifth Column had riddled their defences, did they surrender.

AFTER one of the affrays which marked the first day's fighting in Holland the Dutch turned over the body of a German general slain in action and found in his pocket orders from which it was clear that the Germans expected to occupy The Hague by nightfall. As it was, however, they did not enter the Dutch capital until four days later.

On the frontier the Dutch army of some 400,000 men put up a most gallant and resolute resistance—one fully in accord with the traditional stubbornness and fighting spirit of the burgher race. But the war in the Low Countries soon developed a vein of fantasy which finds no place in the military textbooks. Above the heads of the soldiery lining the trenches and occupying the forts passed fleets of warplanes from which were dropped, here, there, and everywhere, hundreds, even thousands, of heavily-armed parachutists. As soon as they stumbled to earth these desperadoes hurried off on the missions of death and destruction to which they had been assigned—missions in which they were all too powerfully aided by numbers of the Nazi Fifth Column. Soon there was not one front but a thousand. Every town of any size, every important railway bridge, every vital road junction and lock was attacked by these walking arsenals who left behind them a train of havoc.

Treachery an Ever-Present Danger

Along the coast, too, thousands of Germans were landed from Nazi transports in the rear of the Dutch defences. Rotterdam was invaded by a Nazi host who for hours and days fought for the possession of the aerodrome at Waalhaven and even beleaguered the city itself. There was heavy fighting in some of the principal streets, and by the evening of Saturday, May 11, the whole of the Old Town was ablaze, together with much of the shipping in the harbour. Sniping was continuous, and the Dutch authorities had to employ light artillery to demolish houses in which Fifth Columnists—including some of Dutch race and nationality—were making their stand.

Treachery, indeed, was an ever-present danger to which the Dutch were exposed. According to report it was treachery which enabled the Germans to seize the bridge over an arm of the Rhine at Arnhem, thus opening the way for the Nazi motorized columns into the interior of Holland. An even greater disaster was the capture of the two Moerdyk bridges which form the principal link between northern and southern Holland. Here a group of Nazis, some of whom had descended by parachute and others had lain concealed in innocent-looking barges moored in the Hollandische Diep, approached the bridges. They were wearing Dutch uniforms, and chatted in most affable fashion with the Dutch guards. Suddenly they whipped out their guns and ordered the sentinels to surrender, while at the same time others of their band flung hand grenades into the guard-houses. In this way the Dutch were prevented from blowing up the bridges, and the German forces were enabled to advance against Dordrecht and Rotterdam from the south.

Yet another incident in the tale of mischance was the failure of the Belgians to destroy the bridges at Maastricht at the junction of the Dutch, Belgian, and German frontiers (*see* page 540). With these bridges in their hands the Germans were enabled to pour through the gap thus created in the Dutch-Belgian front, while the main Dutch army was still waiting a frontal attack.

But great as were the ignoble triumphs of the traitors, overwhelming as was the mass of armoured columns with which the Germans ploughed their way across the Dutch lowlands, the principal contribution towards the invaders' victory was made by their air force. "Our soldiers," said General Winkelman, the Dutch Commander-in-Chief, in his "Cease fire" broadcast of May 14, "have been exposed to the destruction and bombardment of the overwhelmingly strong German Air Arm, and not only the soldiers but the civilian population, our

On the surrender of a large part of the Dutch army (May 14), most of the ships of the Dutch Navy in European waters found refuge in British ports. Top, left, are some Dutch sailors after landing in England. Above, left, a Dutch refugee mother comes ashore smiling in relief that her two children are now out of immediate danger. The refugees found their Government already established here, and right is the Dutch Prime Minister, Jonkheer de Geer (on the left of photograph), leaving the Netherlands Legation with the Dutch Minister in London, Dr. E. M. Van Verduynen.

Photos, Central Press, "News Chronicle" and G.P.U.

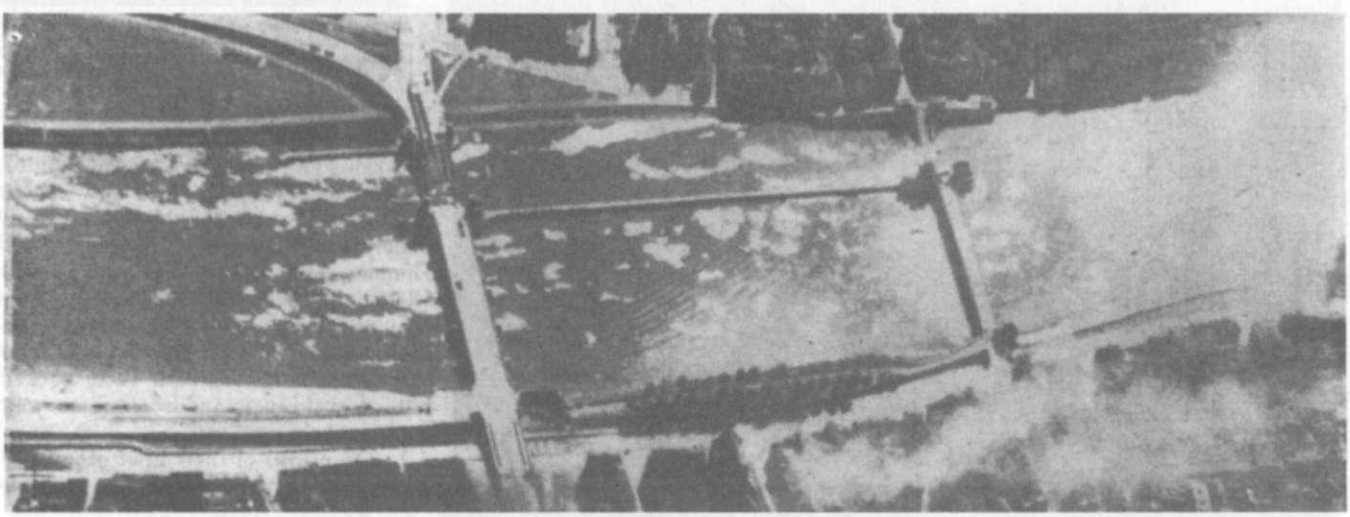
Parachutists Come to Earth—and a British Prison

As soon as they set foot to earth in the Low Countries many of the Nazi parachutists were seized and foiled in their attempts at sabotage. Those taken by British forces were brought to England for internment. Our photographs show Nazi parachutists and Luftwaffe officers in their blue-grey jackets and green-grey breeches, under escort at London Bridge Station.

Photos, Exclusive to THE WAR ILLUSTRATED

women and children, have fallen victims to the German warplanes." Rotterdam, he went on to state, had " undergone the dire fate which total war brings to towns and cities," and Utrecht and other towns were threatened with the same fate. How terrible had been Rotterdam's ordeal was only revealed later; in a communiqué issued by the Dutch Legation in Paris it was stated that at least 100,000 people were killed and a third of the city destroyed in the course of the German bombardment. Two squadrons of German bombers flew over the city in close formation, dropping delayed action bombs which " ploughed a veritable furrow of destruction." Again and again the 'planes repeated the operation, until they had completed what was rightly described as " this monstrous work of destruction, horrifying as a nightmare and absolutely without precedent."

Not until all hope had gone did the Dutch resistance cease. In the course of the five days' fighting the Dutch army had lost a quarter of its total of 400,000 men; some regiments—for instance, the Grenadiers—had lost four-fifths of their strength. Holland's entire bombing force of some fifty machines was wiped out in the fighting; when only one plane was left the pilot, who had still four bombs in his rack, told his comrades: " I shall let the Germans have it! " He went up, dropped his bombs on Waalhaven aerodrome—and never returned. Even after the capitulation of May 14 a section of the Dutch army maintained their resistance in Zeeland, and most of the units of the Dutch navy escaped to join the Allied fleet.



This oblique aerial photograph of the Dutch town of Maastricht, on the Meuse, close to the Belgian frontier, shows the damage done by R.A.F. bombers to two of the bridges. In each case the farther end of the bridge has been blown up, seriously blocking the waterway and roadways. These bridges were vitally important to the Nazis in their push into Belgium, and their destruction is a credit to the accuracy of our bombers.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

Our Navy to the Rescue of Holland in Distress

So swift was the Nazi onslaught on Holland that it was found impossible for the Allies to send any really effective military aid. The British Navy, however, was as usual on the spot, and, again as usual, proved its worth in a variety of ways, some of which are described below. French naval units also took a notable part.

A young marine has just returned home after taking part in a landing on the coast of Holland. He is carrying his trophies—two German steel helmets. *Photo, Associated Press*

As soon as the first news of the invasion of Holland was received in England a number of destroyers were dispatched to Dutch ports with a view to taking off refugees and to supporting the hard-pressed Dutch with the fire of their guns. Minesweepers, too, were active in keeping the ports open, and minelayers sowed mines with a view to preventing the approach of Nazi warships.

One of the places occupied was the Hook of Holland, where a force of Marines, later reinforced by a small body of British military and a French contingent, was landed from the destroyers. Here it was, on Monday, May 13, that the senior officer of the British destroyers alongside the quay was informed that Queen Wilhelmina had just arrived. Hurrying to greet her and to offer his assistance he found her perfectly calm, despite the din of the bombardment in the neighbourhood and the leaping flames of innumerable fires. She walked up the gangway, and her first words were: "I want to go to Flushing, please. Do you know where it is?" On receiving an affirmative reply, the Queen asked: "Do you know the minefields?" The captain replied that he knew the position of the British and Nazi mines, but was not quite sure of the position of those laid by the Dutch. On this information being given him, he placed one of his destroyers at Queen Wilhelmina's service and soon she was on the way to safety.

A short time before, Princess Juliana and her family had similarly taken refuge on a British warship; but for this timely assistance she would inevitably have been captured by the Nazis, or as likely as not killed by one of the bombs which were dropped close by. As it was, a magnetic mine was dropped only a hundred yards in front of the ship which was taking her to England; fortunately it exploded immediately on hitting the water and the destroyer passed on its way unscathed.

One British naval officer became "Commissionaire for the Hook of Holland," as he himself called it. "My job was to assist evacuees," he said, "but when I arrived I found the Dutch trying to defend about fifteen different fronts against parachutists.

"Every time we moved we were bombed," he went on; "it was like partridges with a hawk. Many of the parachutists were shot on the wing, but there were Fifth Columnists everywhere, and my men could trust nobody.

A Dutch soldier, who, after an attempt to escape, was found drifting out at sea on a fragile life-saving raft, is here being rescued by a British destroyer. *Photo, Keystone*

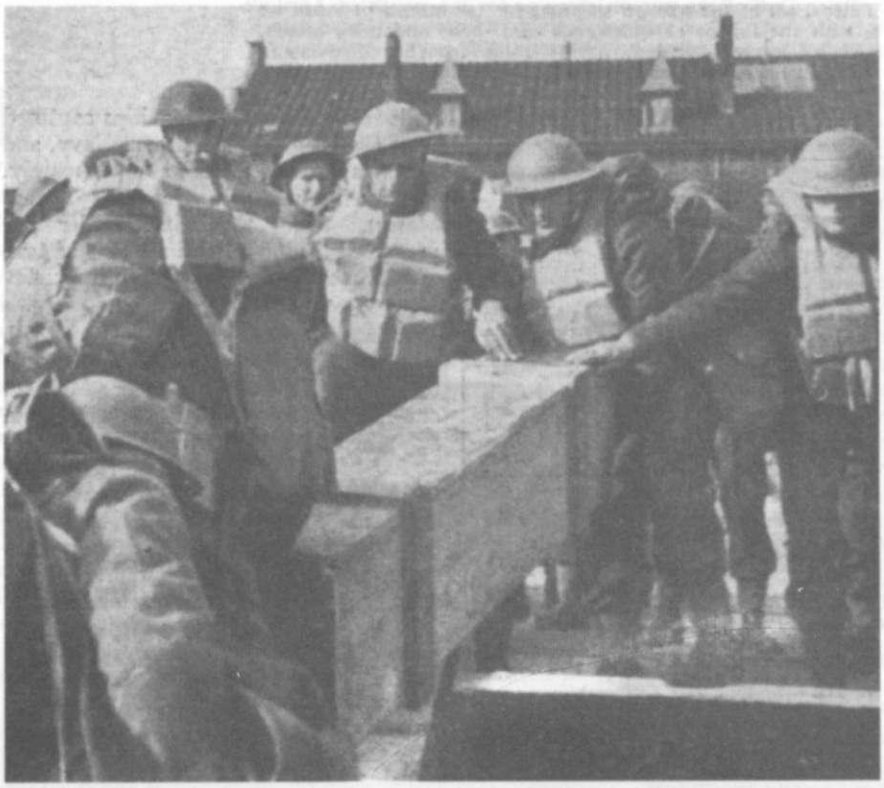
Refugees were everywhere. Some arrived in motor-coaches and we bunged them into ships and sent them to England."

Towards the end of the day he was requested by the Dutch authorities to undertake the work of demolition. "The bombs were coming down now," he said, "but my lads tottered around nonchalantly with loads of explosives under their arms. I sent off an able seaman and two youngsters with their pockets full of explosives, and soon there were explosions everywhere."

In the course of their brief occupation of the Hook the British sailors, soldiers, and marines arranged the embarkation of many thousands of evacuees. At 2 p.m. on May 13 the marines embarked in destroyers, the last to leave, just as the

These men are French marines and sailors who have just come ashore at one of the places in Holland where, as described in this page, British and French contingents were landed. With them is a Dutch soldier. Many of them were carried to the ports of disembarkation in destroyers. *Photo, Wide World*

Gallantry and Resource in a Fantastic War

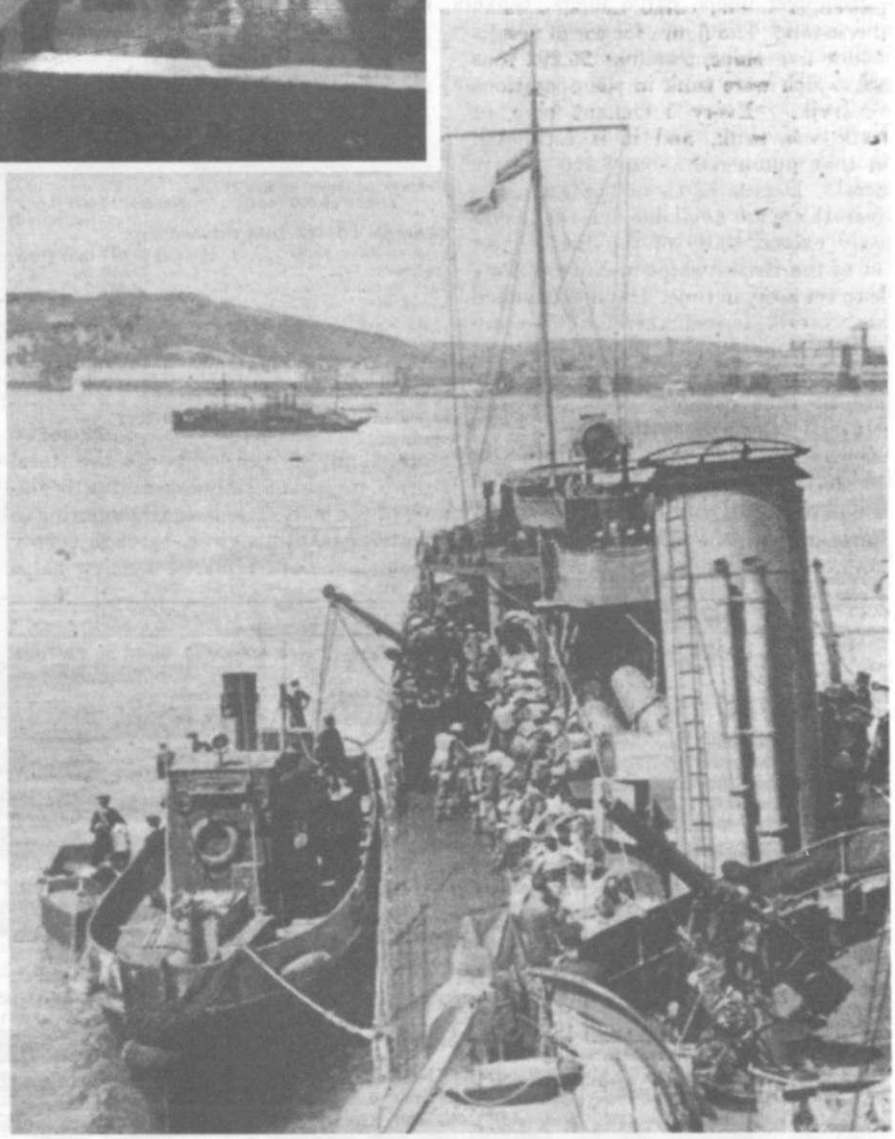


heaviest air attack of all was being delivered by 13 large bombers, dropping both bombs and magnetic mines.

A second naval force was dispatched to Ijmuiden, the North Sea port of Amsterdam. On landing, the men at once went into action against parachutists, and then gave invaluable assistance to the Dutch authorities in destroying everything that might be of value to the fast-approaching enemy. First, the oil stores at Amsterdam were set ablaze; then the canals were blocked with sunken vessels, the harbour was filled with scuttled barges, the quay-sides wrecked. They would have blown up the lock-gates but for the fact that the released water would have flooded all the poorer quarter of Amsterdam; as it was, they contented themselves with destroying all the machinery and blowing up the power-houses. All this activity was crammed into less than twelve hours, and during those twelve hours air attacks were constant.

It was from Ijmuiden, too, that a British naval expeditionary force consisting of a number of motor torpedo-boats set out across country via the canals and Amsterdam to the Zuyder Zee. There they guarded the shore against the German attack that was threatening from the farther shore, and maintained their patrol until the huge pall of smoke that lay above Amsterdam showed them that the work of demolition was nearing completion. Despite frequent bombardment from the air none of the M.T.B.s was hit, but they had the great satisfaction, just as they left Ijmuiden for their homeward journey across the North Sea, of shooting down a Nazi 'plane which had been machine-gunning the crowds of refugees. Twelve hours later the glare of Amsterdam's burning oil dumps could be seen fifty miles out at sea, and it was plain that from Amsterdam—and probably from Rotterdam, too—the Germans did not succeed in obtaining a drop of oil.

Many other spectacular feats were carried out by the Navy in those concluding hours of Dutch independence. Never was the versatility of Britain's seamen and marines better displayed, or their natural good humour combined so excellently with dogged courage. Well did they deserve what was said of them by the officer in command at the Hook. "I have been very deeply impressed," he wrote in his report, "by the cheerful, calm and confident bearing and conduct of the personnel, both naval and military, which was indeed beyond praise."



Here is one of the destroyers that carried a contingent of British soldiers to the Dutch coast. The troops are being taken ashore in a small tender. The men are wearing life-belts, and in the top photograph, in which they are seen bringing their gear on to the quay, they still retain them.

Photos, Keystone

The Allies Have More Ships Than Before the War

Here in this survey by Peter Duff of the war on shipping for the month of April we have demonstrated that, with the failure or quiescence of U-boat and mine attack, the Allies' shipping strength is steadily increasing. When the ships from Scandinavia and the Low Countries are added the result is as described in the heading to this page.

THE German invasion of Denmark and Norway had a profound effect on the shipping position. First, the fine Norwegian Mercantile Marine, in itself larger than the entire German Merchant Navy, became available to the Allies, in fact an Allied fleet; secondly, the entire Danish mercantile fleet became technically an enemy fleet and therefore liable to seizure by the Allies; thirdly, the cargoes of Danish ships at sea became complete contraband and a serious leak in the North Sea blockade of Germany became effectively sealed; and, fourthly, the Germans suffered far greater losses at sea than all the Allies together.

The figures in the tables in this page have a remarkable story to tell. First, there are no entries against four categories —passenger liners, cargo liners, tankers and coasters. The figure for cargo vessels includes five ships, totalling 26,292 tons gross, which were sunk in the operations at Narvik. Every merchant ship at Narvik was sunk, and it is estimated that they numbered about forty, mostly neutral. Details of these neutral losses at Narvik are not available, but they must greatly exceed those of the British, for most of the British ships in Norway were able to get away in time. Having deducted these Narvik losses, therefore, we are left with four British cargo vessels of 17,795 tons gross, the lowest monthly figure in that category since the war began. It is now clear that the German concentration on the operations in Scandinavia relieved the pressure on Allied and neutral shipping in other areas.

Early in April the Minister of Shipping announced that he had at his disposal more than 99 per cent of the total British merchant shipping at the beginning of the war. The losses, amounting to about 725,000 tons gross, through enemy action had been replaced by new ships built in British yards, by ships captured from the enemy by the Royal Navy, and by ships purchased from abroad (mainly, it may be revealed, from the United States). Since that time Hitler has presented the Allies with millions of tons of fine, modern Scandinavian shipping.

Norway's was the third largest merchant fleet in the world, excluding the British Empire's, amounting to about 5,000,000 tons gross. Denmark owned an additional one million tons. Like all Scandinavian shipping, this tonnage was almost always plying in overseas waters under charter to other countries, and therefore only a small percentage could have been captured by the Germans in home ports. In any event, Norway's fleet was to a large extent already under charter to the Allies, but now all Norwegian ships, including 2,000,000 tons of tankers, came into the service of the Allies, and not at the rates of hire extorted by neutrals.

Danish ships became technically enemies and liable to seizure, but an order of the Ministry of Shipping ordained that Danish officers and seamen might man their own vessels in Allied service. More than 150 Danish ships put in voluntarily at Allied ports and offered their services.

The invasion of Holland and Belgium brought two more merchant fleets into Allied service. About 90 per cent of the Dutch Mercantile Marine of 3,000,000 tons gross escaped seizure, as well as the majority of Belgium's small but efficient fleet of 408,000 tons. Furthermore, 26 German ships of 145,565 tons gross were captured in the Netherlands West and East Indies during May.

ALLIED SHIPPING WAR LOSSES (8 months)

	Sept. 1939 to March 1940		April 1940	
	No.	Tons gross	No.	Tons gross
BRITISH :				
Passenger liners	6	55,063	–	–
Cargo liners ...	31	189,457	–	–
Cargo vessels...	79	273,804	9	43,087
Tankers	22	157,859	–	–
Colliers	7	8,891	1	1,037
Coasters ...	9	8,033	–	–
Trawlers ...	33	9,133	2	420
Total ...	187	702,240	12	44,544
Naval Auxiliaries :				
Armed merchant cruiser	1	16,697	–	–
Naval trawlers	16	4,999	5	2,404
Total ...	204	723,936	17	46,948
FRENCH :	19	83,274	–	–
POLISH :	1	14,294	–	–
NORWEGIAN :	–	–	2	6,586
Total Allied...	224	821,504	19	53,534
NEUTRAL :	194	512,673	11	28,938
TOTALS ...	418	1,334,177	30	82,472

Neutral Losses by Flags in April 1940 :
Dutch (4); Finnish (1); Greek (1); Norwegian, before April 9 (1); Swedish (4).
In addition several neutral merchant ships, mainly Dutch and Swedish, were sunk at Narvik.

Sinkings by U-boat :
British 9,500 tons — Neutral 11,000 tons

Sinkings by mine :
British 5,500 tons — Neutral 7,000 tons

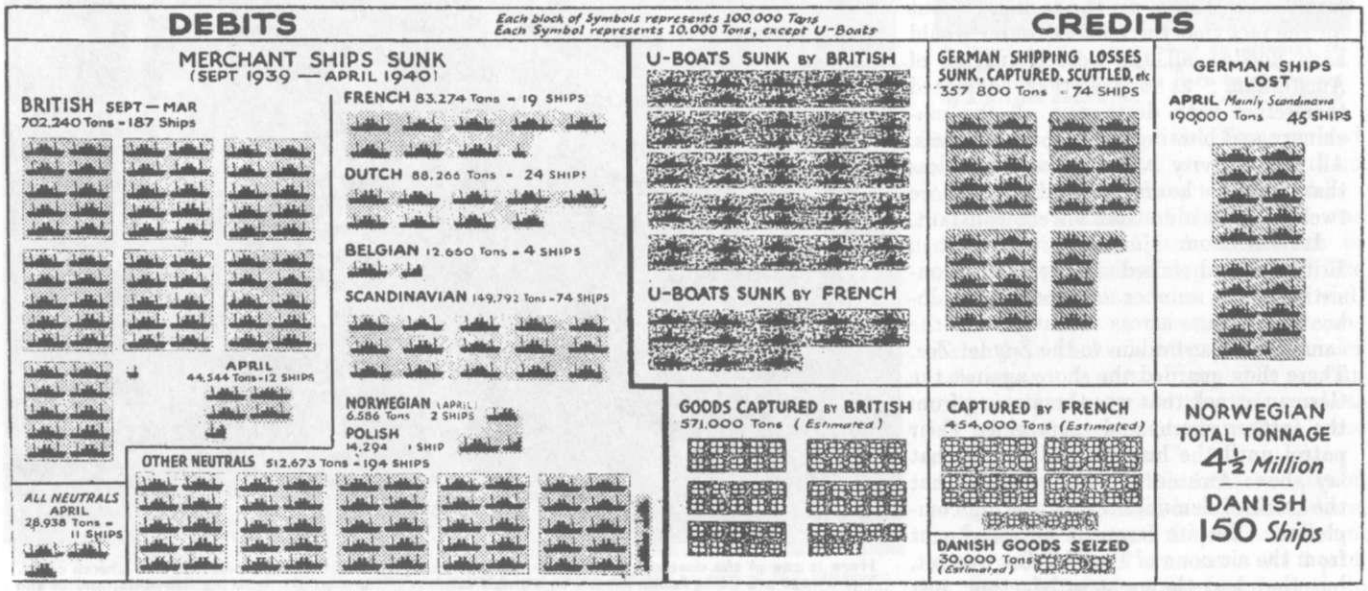
Sinkings by Aircraft :
British 2,500 tons

Sinkings by naval action :
British 26,000 tons — Neutral 50,000 tons (estimated)

GERMAN LOSSES DURING APRIL :

Sunk by Royal Navy ...	17	ships of	87,837 tons gross
Scuttled	2	,,	13,668 ,, ,,
Sunk by mine	1	,,	4,465 ,, ,,
Captured	5	,,	9,752 ,, ,,

At least 20 more German merchant ships were sunk by naval action, but their tonnage is not known. It is estimated that the Germans have lost 760,000 tons of merchant shipping since the beginning of the war, including 145,000 tons captured in Dutch Colonial ports.



Continuing our monthly record of the sea war from page 404, this diagram makes clear two main facts: (1) that losses by U-boat and mine were as low in April as in March, and (2) that the Scandinavian campaign added immensely to the credits side of the Allies' shipping account.

Yugoslavia's Army is Powerful to Defend

Situated in the heart of the proverbially uneasy Balkans and flanked on either side by "dissatisfied" powers, Yugoslavia has had perforce to maintain an army as large and as well-equipped as her resources permit. Some details are given below.

For some months past soldiers of the Yugoslav army have been busy constructing new defences in the valleys of the rivers Mur and Drava, adjoining the frontier with former Austria. These defences, which utilize the natural advantages of undulating terrain, intersected at times by the outrunners of the chalky Styrian Alps, preclude the possibility of a lightning invasion on the Polish model by mechanized Nazi forces.

The brunt of an attack from Germany would be borne by the Fourth Army, consisting of three infantry divisions and one division of cavalry. The cavalry and one division of infantry (the Save Division) are stationed at Zagreb. In order to deal with the less likely possibility of an invasion over the formidable Karawanken mountains, which cover the remainder of Yugoslavia's frontier with Greater Germany, another infantry division is stationed at Ljubljana, west of Zagreb. A further infantry division of the Fourth Army is stationed at Osjek, in view of a possible Nazi drive through Hungary. Hungary as a source of attack is envisaged also by the garrisoning of the First Army at Novisad, with divisions at Subotica (on the Hungarian frontier), Belgrade and Vaijevo.

The needs of the Dalmatian coast and the Albanian frontier are covered by the Second Army, with H.Q. at Sarajevo, and the Third Army, with H.Q. at Skopjle. The Second Army, comprising the Bosnia, Adria, Zeta and Vrbas divisions, has sub-commands at Banjoluka, Cetinje and Mostar; while the Third Army has divisional commands also at Ishtip, Pristina and Bitolj.

A special feature of the Yugoslav army is the high proportion of machine-guns. Thus, there is one machine-gun company to each two or three rifle companies, and no army division is without its mountain and field-artillery regiments. Bren guns and French 75s are much favoured, but of the 180 heavy guns, all but 29 are horse-drawn.

It is estimated that Yugoslavia, with a population of 16,000,000, has 2,000,000 trained reserves, and in an emergency could put 1,500,000 men in the field immediately. The Serb is a capable shot and fighter at an age far beyond that accepted as militarily useful in more industrialized countries. Yugoslavia would need all these men and more in the event of a simultaneous attack from more than one quarter. She has the longest frontiers of any Balkan State. Against Italy alone she has a land frontier, including Albania, of 475 miles, with a coastline of 435 miles. With Germany she has a frontier of 200 miles, and with Hungary one of 390 miles; while Rumania, Bulgaria and Greece account for a further 845 miles.

It would be indeed almost impossible, as the Yugoslav High Command well realizes, to maintain a stand at the frontiers against a major aggressor for any considerable time. In the event of a Nazi attack through Hungary, for instance, it is extremely probable that the fertile Dunavska Provinče would be largely abandoned and a stand made on the Danube. Elsewhere, the High Command would hope to retain command of those fortified points and passes in the mountains which have so often served as a rallying point for Serb resistance.

Especially with regard to Italy is Yugoslavia's strategic position a sensitive one. The confined, fortified harbours of her Dalmatian coast—Kotor, Sibenik, Gjennovish and Tivat—would be dominated by Italy's air fleets. Further, from Durazzo in Albania runs Yugoslavia's most famous transversal highway, which cuts across the narrowest part of Yugoslavia, and therefore across her communications with Salonika. If the Adriatic were closed to Yugoslavia and her route to the Aegean were barred, she would indeed be in a perilous position.

In the Great War Serbia was able to hold off for a year the huge Austrian armies. But in those days the air weapon did not play a large role, and it is precisely in the air that Yugoslavia is weakest. Her Air Force consists of some 1,000 machines, chiefly Blenheims (short-nosed types), Dornier 17s and Italian Savoia-Marchettis. Her fighters are Hurricanes, Furies and Messerschmitt 109s. The pilots do not exceed 2,000.

As regards aeroplane manufacture, it was only two years ago that Yugoslavia, a great producer of bauxite, began to manufacture her own aluminium; many aeroplane parts, and all jigs and tools, are still imported.

The Serbs are brave and expert in guerilla warfare. Alone, it is improbable that Yugoslavia could hold out for long against a major aggressor, but if speedy help (especially in the air) were given, she would prove a valuable ally.

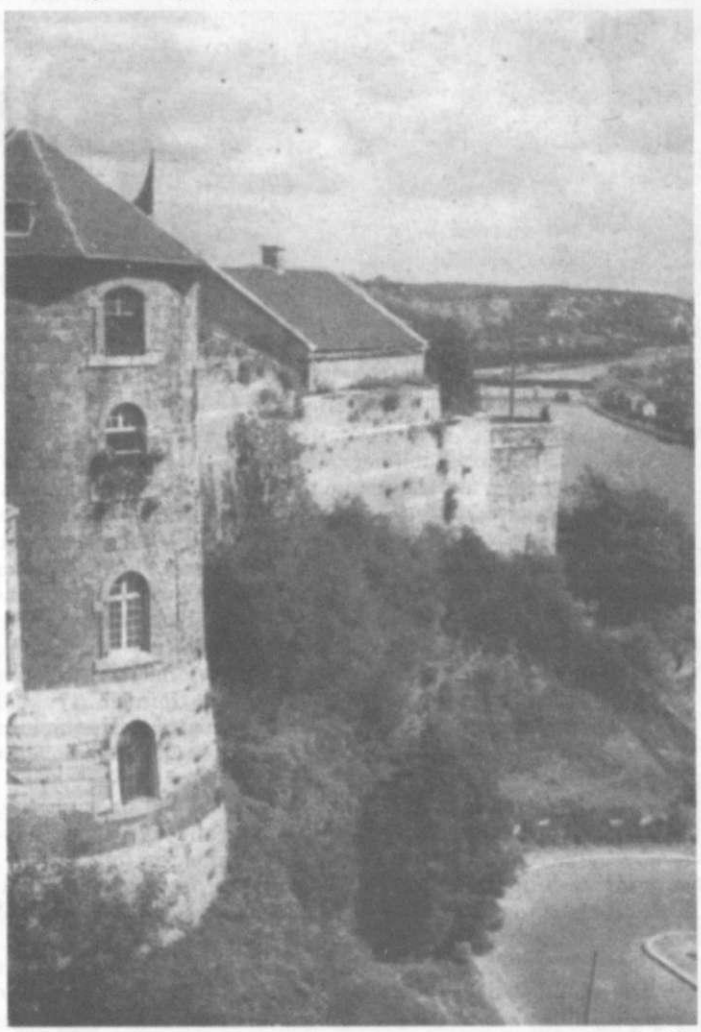
Yugoslavia's army has every form of modern mechanical equipment, from bicycles to tanks; Mussolini is said to have declared that her infantry is the finest in Europe. Above is a Yugoslav cyclist corps and, left, a column of light tanks on manoeuvres.

Photos, Keystone

War Writes Another Terrible Chapter for Namur

The Germans repeatedly bombed Namur, the picturesque old Belgian town at the junction of the Sambre and the Meuse. Furious tank attacks were launched by the Nazis some ten miles from the city in a desperate thrust across the Ardennes. These horses, lying in a deserted Namur street, are the victims of German aerial bombardment.

The havoc wrought in Namur by intensive German air attacks is vividly seen (circle) after an incendiary bomb had exploded in the town; while incendiary bombs are responsible for the building blazing fiercely, bottom right.



Namur has withstood many sieges and has been the scene of bitter fighting during its long, momentous history. In 1914 the Germans bombarded three of Namur's forts and penetrated part of the town. The imposing Citadel stands high above ancient streets and quaysides.

Photos, Planet News, Dorien Leigh, Associated Press

Eye Witness Stories of Episodes and Adventures in the Second Great War

I Saw Horror and Desolation in Louvain

The historic city of Louvain, which suffered so terribly from German bombardment in 1914, had to endure air-bombing as well as shell-fire when war came to Belgium in 1940. The "Daily Mail" correspondent, Paul Bewsher, here paints a poignant picture of the scenes of havoc and distress he witnessed there.

When I walked into Louvain this afternoon (May 16), from a hilltop under fairly heavy shell-fire, I was amazed to find women and children still trudging out. They were only a quarter of a mile from the front line.

As gunfire roared and crashed all round I saw a middle-aged woman pushing a baby in a perambulator down the roadway littered with broken glass and masonry.

Across it drooped the overhead tramway cables, torn down by bomb and shell explosions.

Behind her came a young girl pushing a bicycle, followed by a man with a handcart in which sat a white-faced old lady with a weary, hopeless look.

Beside a bridge was a hastily erected barricade of brand-new wardrobes and cupboards brought from a furnishing shop a few yards away.

Their shining brown doors swung to and fro in the wind, and in the deathly silence between the shell-bursts you could hear the rustle of paper blown along the pavements.

A quarter of a mile from the railway station front line, where machine-guns rattled continually, a grey-haired man came to me wringing his hands and begging for transport to remove his wife, who was ill in bed.

A French liaison officer at once set to work to help him. On my journey home I saw a great fleet of twenty-nine German bombers and fighters flying overhead.

A few minutes later a series of terrific explosions sounded from the town in front.

When I reached it I found a scene of such horror and desolation as I could never imagine. In the main street three buildings were in flames from top to bottom.

Men called me to help, and I dashed into a large department store. In the floor was a huge hole filled with flaming debris.

From this smoke and flame came the faint, wailing voice of a child calling, "Au secours, au secours" ("Help, help"). While people frantically threw buckets of water on the fire and tried to smash open the floor beside the hole, a Belgian gendarme, a British officer,

These two photographs give some idea of the "horror and desolation in Louvain," so graphically described in this page. In that at the top, one of the civilian casualties is being carried off on a stretcher. The lower photograph shows one of the chief streets of the city with practically every house wrecked. In the last war the damage to Louvain was caused chiefly by artillery fire. This time bombing 'planes helped in the dreadful work.

Photos. British Official: Crown Copyright

I WAS THERE!

and a civilian went down to the cellar from a small door above the pavement.

Ten minutes later they brought out a woman whose face was covered by a blood-stained mat of grey hair. Whether she still lived I could not tell.

Then, gently, they carried out a little boy of six with blood-stained face and hands who nodded his head and said "Merci" politely as he was laid on the table. Eight other civilians lay dead in the cellar, I was told.

The Belgian gendarme collapsed after bringing out the woman, but after water had been flung over him he jumped up and went straight into the cellar for more rescue work.

A very gallant man.

I Was One of the Last To Leave Brussels

Brussels, the fall of which was announced by the Germans on May 17, had been for a week a city of rumour and foreboding. A vivid account of how Belgium's capital heard of the German advance is given here by the "Daily Express" correspondent, Geoffrey Cox, who was among the last to leave the city.

ON Thursday (May 9) I drove to Antwerp, and round the Albert Canal area there was an atmosphere of peace. Troops were weeding the flower beds around their barracks and sunbathing on the canal banks.

To them and to most of the people "in the know" in Brussels that night we were just in for another dose of Hitler's war of nerves. The restaurants were crowded with diplomats and high officials dining.

At midnight the 'phone beside my bed rang. A Belgian newspaper editor, a friend, asked me to come round to his office. There I found him standing-by with his staff. The Belgian High Command had word that the Germans were on the march and that Holland would be attacked that night.

At 3 a.m. police cars were tearing madly through the streets rousing A.R.P. workers. A policeman rushed into my hotel and roused three officers. All this time Brussels slept.

At 5 a.m. it came: anti-aircraft fire and bombing of the outskirts.

Saturday passed without any exceptional alarm. British troops, bronzed, confident, magnificently equipped, swung through the outskirts of the city in lorries and on foot, moving towards Louvain. They were loaded down with the lilac that the Belgians flung at them.

Out on the Louvain road the columns moved up through fields of young corn.

Then suddenly I saw six dark specks above Louvain and watched one dive, its engine screaming, towards the city's towers, and saw black specks which I knew were bombs. I thought they were bombing our communications. Later I realized that the front was already only a little distance beyond Louvain.

By Sunday the first panic wave hit Brussels. From the broken front near Maastricht men were back in the capital, telling the crowds on the boulevards a nightmare story of a sky black and roaring with bombers, of tanks that came on in thousands. At midday Spaak, the Foreign Minister, his plump, intelligent face lined and weary, called in the Press and urged it to fight rumour.

Everyone was seeing paratroops everywhere. Squads of motor-cyclists were roaring round and round a block of houses in mid-Brussels that evening when I went to the Censorship. Troops with rifles and machine-guns were watching from the pavements and the houses beyond. "Parachutists. Three have just come down," one passer-by told me.

Air-raid sirens wailed almost continuously all day and most of the night. Few people took any notice of them, for there was no bombing of the centre of the city.

By Sunday night the real truth of the break-through at Maastricht was known. The Belgian troops, told to stand-by at midnight, went into their trenches and pill-boxes, believing this was just one more "alert," but at dawn four hundred bombers came over in relays and began one of the most terrible bombardments ever known.

It was as if the very sky fell on us, the commander of the sector stated. The moment the bombardment lifted the German tanks were racing over the two bridges which were not blown up, and clouds of paratroops were descending on two key villages.

On Monday and Tuesday I drove out again on the Louvain road, now soaked with cavalcades of refugees. British troops were surveying gun positions ready to hold the Louvain-Antwerp-Namur line, which was the Belgians' second line.

M. Paul-Henri Spaak, Belgian Foreign Minister, did much to allay the panic that hit Brussels on May 12, as Mr. Cox relates in this page.
Photo, Dorien Leigh

But by Wednesday (May 15) the German thrust into France had already made any holding of this line difficult. Lorries were pouring out of Brussels with Government archives.

Only three other people were left in our hotel besides the correspondents. The hotel staff was watching anxiously to see if the correspondents were going to leave. That they were taking as the danger sign.

At four we heard that the British Embassy had left that morning. At half-past, eight of us jammed into a French radio van and were moving through the suburbs and out on to the Lille road.

As we drove through the streets in the brilliant sunshine, long queues stood in front of the banks, and lines of cars, almost every one with its mattress on top, streamed out of the city. But under the trees of the boulevards I noticed an old couple sunning themselves as if nothing had happened and a young couple sitting with their arms round each other. . . .

The Sky Over My Hotel Was Full of 'Planes

An astonishing account of the methods of German parachutists was given by an English business man who was in The Hague during a continuous 24-hour raid. Here is the story in his own words.

"I ARRIVED at The Hague on business on Thursday afternoon (May 9). My hotel was empty, and when I asked for news they said: 'We're waiting for them. They are coming over.'

"I went to my top-floor room, but decided not to sleep. At 3 a.m., just as dawn was breaking, hundreds of aeroplanes came over the city, and bombs were falling everywhere. I went out on to the balcony and saw that the sky seemed filled with 'planes, and parachute troops were being dropped in large numbers on several parts of the city.

"Meanwhile, the bombers concentrated their efforts on the important buildings, including the barracks. When the smoke and dust had subsided, I saw that many buildings had been entirely destroyed.

"Bombers, accompanied by fighters, came over in waves of 200, flying sometimes as low as 800 feet. While I watched, Dutch anti-aircraft guns bagged six large machines. One, a 40-seater troop-carrier, burst into flames, struck another, and brought both down. They destroyed three houses, and I saw 40 or 50 bodies in the streets.

I WAS THERE!

"At the same time seaplanes with detachable rubber pontoons, each containing 40 men, settled on the shallow water near the shore. Five hundred men were landed on the beach in this way, wading ashore from the pontoons [see illustration page 541].

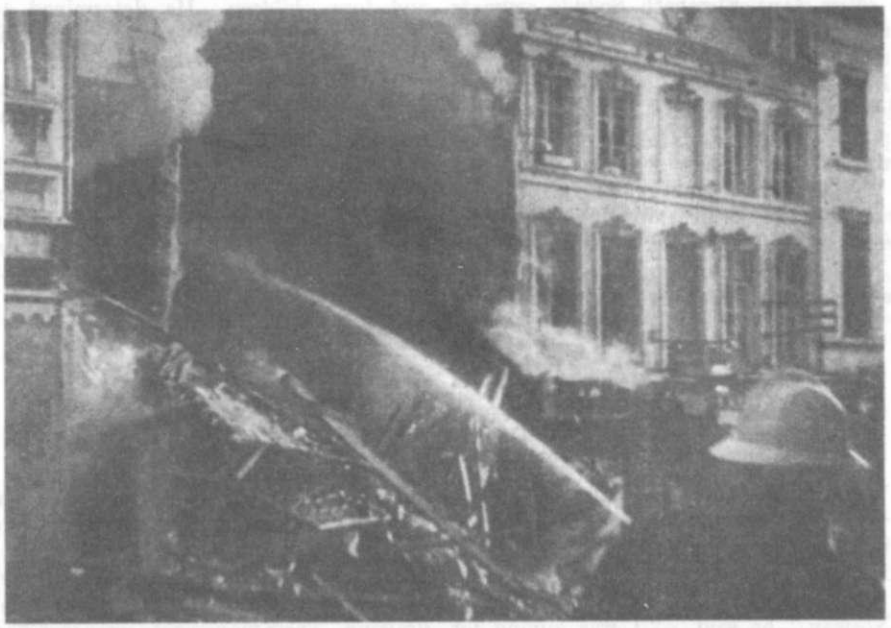
"I was told that the parachute troops had orders to make their way to the principal buildings. They took two of these. Dutch machine-gunners approached. Later they drove them out with grenades.

"The presence of members of the Fifth Column was shown by the way parachute troops approaching main buildings were given directions by residents, including women, in houses near. These people clapped their hands to attract the attention of the parachutists.

"Some were caught in an interesting way. On the night before orders were issued that every Dutch soldier must carry a revolver. The German parachute troops, although dressed in Dutch uniforms, had no revolvers. They were challenged and arrested. Two were shot out of hand by the Dutch sergeant.

"Many of these parachute troops were dressed in all kinds of costumes. Some wore the typical clothes of butchers and bakers' lads, with baskets filled with grenades and other ammunition over their arms covered with white cloth.

"Each parachute party numbered about 40, in charge of a sergeant. These men took the town hall, museum and library near the square. A civilian defence corps, armed only with butchers' knives, was formed immediately to counteract the parachutists. They wore the words 'anti-parachute corps' on their arms."—("Daily Telegraph")



Firemen are playing water on one of the houses in Brussels wrecked and set on fire by bombs dropped by the Nazis. The Belgian Government informed the German Government on the eve of the Nazi invasion that Brussels was an open town and that troops would not be garrisoned in or pass through it, but the Nazis for their own purposes refused to accept this assurance.

Photo, Keystone

We Bluffed Our Way Through The Nazis

Two British airmen, forced to land in Nazi-occupied territory some thirty miles from Antwerp, managed to elude the enemy and to make their way back to England. This story of imperturbable coolness and daring is told below by the leader.

PILOT-OFFICER ALEXANDER MCLEOD and his gunner, Leading Aircraftman Cox, were on patrol when they joined in a dog-fight with Messerschmitts and were forced to land near a farm in German-occupied territory of Belgium.

"While keeping a look-out from a window," said McLeod, "we saw an armoured car approaching. We rushed down to a cellar and kept mousy quiet. We heard the car stop outside, the tramping of heavy feet and guttural voices.

"'This is the end,' we thought, as we heard the door flung open and some of the Germans march in. But they didn't find us.

"When they had gone, we decided to make a bolt for it. We had only gone a short way along the road when an armoured car came along. We dropped into a ditch, waited until it had passed, then crawled into a barn. We eventually reached a river and walked along its bank.

"Germans guarding a bridge spotted us when we were 300 yards away, and shouted to us, but we paid no attention. We thought the best thing to do was to sit on the bank and eat sandwiches.

"To heighten the atmosphere of nonchalance which we were desperately anxious to create, I pulled a cigar from my pocket and began smoking. That satisfied them."

McLeod and his companion eventually contacted a Dutch regiment and got to Antwerp, and thence after some delays to Ostend, from which port a destroyer brought them to England.—("Daily Express" and "News Chronicle")

Twenty-four-year-old Pilot-Officer Alexander McLeod, who tells his story in this page, photographed at his home in Glasgow where he arrived on May 20 after having been reported as missing.

Photo, G.P.U.

We Fled From Nazi Bombing In Belgium

A shipload of refugees from Belgium, who arrived in London on May 17, had many thrilling stories of escape from death, a selection from which are given below.

AFTER her first night's sleep for eight days, Mrs. Ella Bain, Belgian wife of a seaman living in Antwerp, said that one day three parachutists came down in Antwerp. One was immediately caught; the others got away and were loose in the city.

Three houses were bombed near her home, so she decided to leave.

She paid a taxi driver 1,000 francs to take her to Ostend.

"We were at the port for two days, and had nothing to eat during that time until three Belgian soldiers found us coffee and rolls.

"While we were hiding in a cellar during a raid I allowed a man to sit on my case. He was shivering from head to foot. He said that he was not frightened, but that he had been wounded in the last war.

"But I think it was fright, for a little later he and another man were discovered to be spies. They were seized and taken off. They had been seen signalling with torches from a wood."

I WAS THERE

Miss Jane Elizabeth Seddon, who is nearly seventy, and has been an English teacher in the Sacred Heart Convent, Brussels, for twenty-one years, told how she saw the little brother of one of her pupils standing on a balcony watching the German 'planes.

"Then the bombs came down," she said. "One went through the balcony and the boy was killed."

An English-born manager of a drug store in Brussels brought over his wife and four children. He determined to leave when they had had as many as fifteen air bombardments in one day.

"One of many dramatic incidents was the landing of one parachutist near the railway station," he said.

"Despite the short machine-gun which the German carried, a man rushed at him before he could bring it into use, seized him by the ears and banged his head on the ground until he was dead."—("*Evening News.*")

I Filmed the British Troops in Norway

An American newsreel cameraman, Mr. Bonney M. Powell, was with the British troops at Namsos, was machine-gunned by German bombers, and saw the sinking of the "Afridi" and the "Bittern." Here is his own story of his adventures in Norway.

MR. POWELL was originally assigned to film the war in Finland and spent three months there before the invasion of Norway.

"I then got instructions to go on to Norway," he said. "I was aiming for Namsos. When I arrived there the whole town was in ruins. There was not a chimney-pot standing.

"I had filmed most of this and sent my results down to the quay. I learned afterwards that this film had been put on board the 'Bittern.' I was on top of a hill when the 'Bittern' was attacked by enemy aircraft. One aeroplane dived to within about 100 ft. of the British vessel and scored a hit, and I watched my film go to the bottom."

Mr. Powell made his way from Namsos towards Steinkjer to take pictures of the withdrawal of the British troops.

"The journey was one incessant attack from the air by German bombers," he said. "I was machine-gunned 14 times on the journey. They dived so close to our car that I could look into the eyes of the pilot as the 'plane flew overhead.

"We had a close shave when one bomb dropped only a few feet in front of our car. It did not burst but bounced away from the road. The Nazi airmen came from behind the mountains and were on top of us in a second.

"I got to within six miles of Steinkjer and watched the British troops withdrawing. Their movements were watched by wave after wave of German bombers, who flew just above the tree tops, forcing them under cover. The troops had no backing from British fighters to keep the bombers off, and were helpless.

"Wherever the British were they were not only bombed and machine-gunned mercilessly, but their positions were radioed to German ships lying in the fjords, who were able to shell them at the given range. But the withdrawal tactics were wonderful.

"The heroism of a captain in charge of a company of one regiment was remarkable. He brought out his company of 200 men through the German lines under continuous bombing attacks, and managed to cover 47 miles through snow across two valleys and mostly at night without a single casualty.

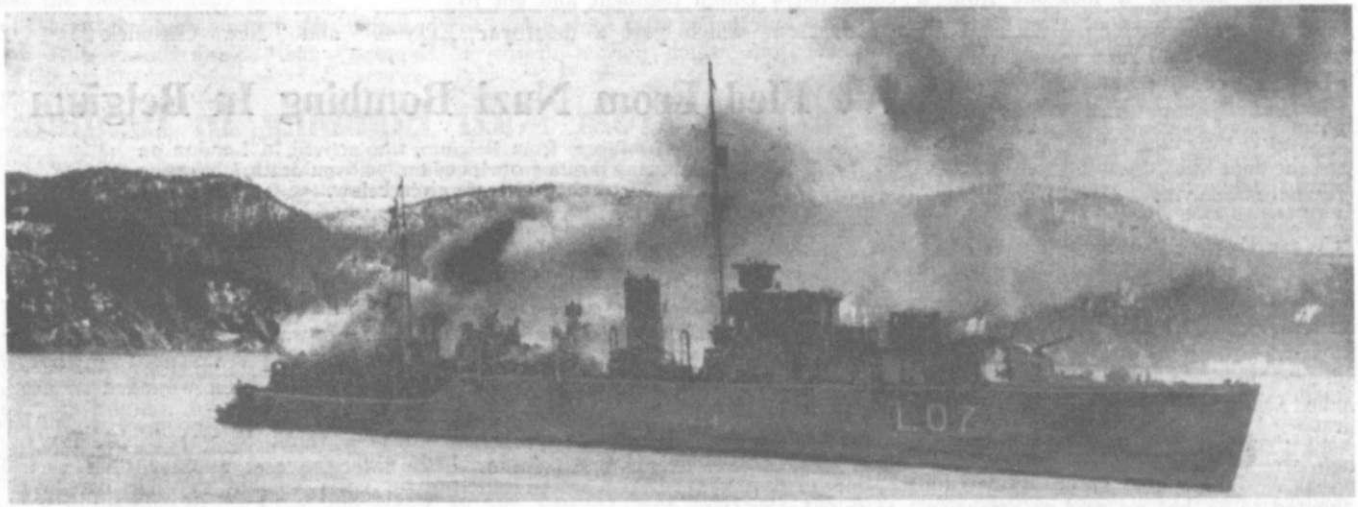
"These men eventually had to abandon their steel helmets to avoid detection.

"One man belonging to this company who acted as a runner crawled through snow under continuous machine-gun and rifle fire to bring news to his company when the road was clear.

"The pier was the last structure left in Namsos to be bombed," concluded Mr. Powell. "I was only a few hundred yards away when a German bomber came over, went into a vertical dive and scored a direct hit with a 500 lb. bomb. There were a lot of stores on the pier at the time. The lot went up. It almost destroyed the pier, but we managed to make our way along what was left to embark for Britain.

"I embarked in the early hours of May 3 and in several hours we were bombed by 39 aeroplanes. The 'Afridi' was attacked by two German 'planes. They missed and then a third swooped from out of the sun and got her. Other warships went to her rescue. That was the last we saw of any German 'planes."

Here, after their arrival home, are some of the British soldiers who (as related in this page) threw away their steel helmets in Norway, so that they should not be detected by Nazi 'planes.
Photo. Keystone



In this remarkably dramatic photograph, H.M.S. "Bittern" is seen in flames after she had been beaten off Nazi bombers for many hours on the coast of Norway. Eventually the survivors were rescued by another warship and the "Bittern" was sunk to prevent her becoming a danger to navigation. The "Bittern," an escort vessel, a sloop, was completed in 1937. She had a tonnage of 1,190 and normally carried a complement of 125.
Photo, Central Press

HISTORIC WORDS

Extracted from Authoritative War Speeches and Statements

(*Continued from page* 564)

Tuesday, May 14, 1940

GENERAL WINKELMAN, Commander-in-Chief of the Dutch Forces, in a broadcast statement :

Netherlanders—I want to give you personally an explanation of the very serious decision which you have just heard over the wireless. We have had to lay down our arms because we must. We had decided to defend our Fatherland to the very limit. Today we have reached that limit.

Our soldiers have fought with the courage which will always be beyond compare. In face of the technical methods of the enemy this was not enough. In thousands they have fallen in defence of the liberty of the Netherlands. Our air forces were so reduced that they could no longer support the army. We could not fight against the German superiority in the air. . . .

Rotterdam has undergone the sad experience of total war. Utrecht and other cities were threatened in the same way. Practically unsupported, except by our own force, we could not see our way to go on fighting. These facts have led me to this very serious decision. We have given up fighting. I realize how much of a shock this news must be to the civilian population. But I represent the Government. I know all that has happened and I have not only the right, but also the duty, to take a decision in the interests of the country.

The war was completely one-sided. To have gone on would only have meant that still more innocent victims would have fallen. I cannot tell you how deeply I feel the responsibility for taking this decision. It was impossible to go on.

We must put our confidence in the indestructible powers which always distinguish our people. Our new lot must be carried with courage and determination. We must have confidence in the future. We must show this in our behaviour. We must set ourselves to reconstruct our damaged country. Long live her Majesty the Queen! Long live the Fatherland!

Wednesday, May 15

QUEEN WILHELMINA, in a broadcast to the peoples of Great Britain and the British Empire :

I and my people have always hoped that it would be possible to limit the extent of the European conflict, and that a reasonable basis for a lasting peace could be established in the near future. Today it appears that all our fervent prayers in favour of common understanding between nations have proved futile.

Today we have to admit that no happiness can be expected in this world if those who are solely responsible for the present situation are not definitely checked in their course of unscrupulous destruction and utter disregard of law and the most elementary principles of morality.

After a heroic struggle my nation, that has attempted everything to maintain peace, is being overpowered by sheer superiority of force. But morally we can never be conquered. Our spirit will remain unbroken because our conscience is clear.

Notwithstanding the great distress that my people are suffering at the present moment, and the oppression under which they will live until the country will be free again, I am convinced that they will never give up their faith in the cause of freedom and justice.

I pray God that our allied cause be blessed, and that the dawn of the day when freedom will be restored to the Netherlands and to all other victims of German aggression be near.

Thursday, May 16

M. REYNAUD, French Premier, in a speech in the Chamber of Deputies :

The German Army has unleashed all its forces of destruction against the pivot of our front. They came, all these tanks and aeroplanes, methodically accumulated for so many years, thanks to the indisputable privation of the Germans for the obsession of their leader—war to beat down France and dominate first Europe and then the world.

Hitler wants to win the war in two months. If he fails, he is doomed and he knows it. That is why, after long hesitation, after affirming that he would let the war mature slowly, he has taken a chance. We are perfectly aware of the danger. We know that the days, weeks, the months to come will forge future centuries. This peril we face unitedly.

We must not be content with vain hopes or words. Our soldiers are fighting, French blood is flowing. The times in which we are about to live may perhaps have nothing in common with those through which we have just passed.

We shall be called upon to take measures which yesterday might have appeared revolutionary. We may perhaps have to change methods—and men. For any weakness, punishment will come—death. We must immediately forge new hearts for ourselves. We are full of hope, our lives count for nothing. One thing alone counts—the preservation of France.

'CONQUER WE MUST—CONQUER WE SHALL'

Mr. Winston Churchill's first broadcast as head of the Government was made on May 19, 1940, *at the end of his first week of office, and up to then the most momentous week of the War. We reprint here important passages from this inspiring speech.*

I SPEAK to you for the first time as Prime Minister in a solemn hour in the life of our country, of our Empire, of our Allies, and, above all, of the cause of freedom.

A tremendous battle is raging in France and Flanders. The Germans, by a remarkable combination of air bombing and heavily armoured tanks, have broken through the French defences north of the Maginot Line, and strong columns of their armoured vehicles are ravaging the open country which for the first day or two was without defenders.

They have penetrated deeply and spread alarm and confusion in their track. Behind them are now pouring infantry in lorries, and behind them again large masses are moving forward. . . .

We must not allow ourselves to be intimidated by the presence of these armoured vehicles in unexpected places behind our lines. If they are behind our front the French are also at many points fighting actively behind theirs.

It would be foolish, however, to disguise the gravity of the hour. It would be still more foolish to lose heart and courage or to suppose that well-trained, well-equipped armies numbering three to four millions of men could be overcome within the space of a few weeks or even months by a scoop or raid by mechanized vehicles however formidable. . . .

FOR myself I have invincible confidence in the French Army and its leaders. Only a very small part of that splendid Army has yet been heavily engaged, and only a very small part of France has yet been invaded. . . .

The Armies must cast away the idea of resisting attack behind concrete lines or natural obstacles, and must realize that mastery can only be regained by furious, unrelenting assault. And this spirit must not only animate the High Command, but must inspire every fighting man.

In the air, often at serious odds, even at odds hitherto thought overwhelming, we have been clawing down three or four to one of our enemies, and the relative balance of the British and German air forces is now considerably more favourable to us than at the beginning of the battle. In cutting down the German bombers we are fighting our own battle, as well as that of France. . . .

We must expect that as soon as stability has been reached on the Western Front the bulk of that hideous apparatus of aggression which dashed Holland into ruins and slavery in a few days will be turned upon us. I am sure I speak for all when I say that we are ready to face it, to endure it and to retaliate against it to any extent that the unwritten laws of war permit.

There will be many men and women in this island who, when the ordeal comes upon them, as come it will, will feel comfort and even a pride, that they are sharing the perils of our lads at the front—soldiers, sailors and airmen, God bless them—and are drawing away from them a part, at least, of the onslaught they have to bear.

Is not this the appointed time for all to make the utmost exertion in their power? If the battle is to be won we must provide our men with the ever-increasing quantities of the weapons and ammunition they need. We must have, and have quickly, more aeroplanes, more tanks, more shells, more guns—there is an imperious need for these vital munitions. They increase our strength against the powerfully armed enemy; they replace the wastage of the obstinate struggle; and the knowledge that wastage will speedily be replaced enables us to draw more readily on our reserves and throw them in now when everything means so much.

OUR task is not only to win the battle but to win the war. After this battle in France abates its force, there will come a battle for our island, for all that Britain is and all that Britain means. That will be the struggle.

In that supreme emergency we shall not hesitate to take every step, even the most drastic, to call forth from our people the last ounce and the last inch of effort of which they are capable.

The interests of property and the hours of labour are nothing compared to the struggle for life and honour and freedom, to which we have vowed ourselves. . . .

If this is one of the most awe-striking periods in the long history of France and Britain it is also, beyond doubt, the most sublime. . . .

The British and French people have advanced to rescue not only Europe but mankind from the foulest and most soul-destroying tyranny that has ever darkened and stained the pages of history.

Behind them, behind us, behind the Armies and Fleets of Britain and France, gather a group of shattered States and bludgeoned races—the Czechs, the Poles, the Norwegians, the Danes, the Dutch, the Belgians—upon all of whom the long night of barbarism will descend unbroken even by a star of hope, unless we conquer, as conquer we must, as conquer we shall.

TODAY is Trinity Sunday. Centuries ago words were written to be a call and a spur to the faithful servants of truth and justice :

"Arm yourselves and be ye men of valour and be in readiness for the conflict, for it is better for us to perish in battle than to look upon the outrage of our nation and our altars. As the Will of God is in Heaven even so let Him do."

OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

Tuesday, May 14, 1940

By order of Netherlands High Command, **Dutch Army on mainland surrendered,** large numbers of enemy troops having crossed Moerdyk Bridge and retaken **Rotterdam.** Fighting continued in island-province of Zeeland.

Battle of the Meuse continued along 120-mile front. German columns, which had broken through defences at **Maastricht,** spread fanwise behind them. South-east of **Tirlemont** French armoured columns held up enemy tanks.

South of Liége attacks of great severity were made in sector between **Namur** and **Givet,** in that of **Sedan,** and also between **Longwy** and **Montmédy.** Sedan had been evacuated.

Dutch Government removed **to London.**

War Office announced that Allied forces had made successful landing at Bjerkvik, 7 miles north of **Narvik.**

Volunteer anti-parachute defence force initiated in Britain.

Wednesday, May 15

After hard fighting B.E.F. successfully held severe German attacks. **Louvain,** in British sector, now evacuated and being subjected to heavy shelling.

Battle of the Meuse raged furiously. Between **Mézières** and **Namur** enemy crossed river at several points. Near **Sedan** they drove a **salient into French lines** during night of May 14-15.

Mass attacks by R.A.F. and French aircraft on advancing German columns held up enemy's advance while French withdrew to main defensive positions, which are continuation of Maginot Line.

French announced successful counter-attack in region of **Gembloux,** on Brussels-Namur road.

The Hague, Amsterdam and other Dutch cities **occupied by Germany.**

Dutch Foreign Minister stated that Dutch Army had lost one quarter of its total of 400,000 men.

Admiralty announced that H.M. destroyer "Valentine" had been damaged by air attack off Dutch coast and beached.

Thursday, May 16

Biggest R.A.F. offensive of war took place during night of May 15-16, when bombers raided enemy roads, railways and military encampments **east of Rhine.**

Heavy fighting same night between **Gembloux** and **Namur** in sector south-east of Brussels, enemy attacking with mechanized forces and aeroplanes.

Fighting in progress during day on British front in Belgium.

French War Office stated that day was comparatively calm, with much regrouping of units on both sides. Great air battle above Sedan.

Belgian Government moved to **Ostend.**

Germans attempting to crush Dutch resistance in Zeeland, **Flushing** being ultimate objective.

Five air attacks made on Nancy during night. Nazi aircraft shot down near Paris.

Allied forces converging on **Narvik** occupied two villages to north on opposite side of fjord. Naval aircraft attacked fuel supplies in Bergen area.

Friday, May 17

War Office announced that **B.E.F.** had **withdrawn** to positions **west of Brussels.**

Germans claimed to have entered Brussels after capturing **Louvain** and **Malines.**

Massive German attack developed in salient between the Sambre and Meuse, heavy tank divisions being engaged. Heavy fighting on front from Sedan to **Rethel.**

Intense air activity over the whole Front. R.A.F. again raided Western Germany during night, **oil depots** at **Bremen and Hamburg** being systematically bombed.

Dutch islands of Walcheren and Beveland in Zeeland evacuated.

Belgian liner "Ville de Bruges" sunk by bombing.

Enemy minefield discovered off Cape Agulhas, most southerly point of S. Africa.

Allied forces in Northern Norway now at **Rombaks Fjord,** two miles from Narvik. Germans withdrawing eastward.

FRANCE CANNOT DIE!

M. Reynaud, the French Premier and Defence Minister, in his historic statement on the war situation to the Senate on May 21, declared:

The country is in danger. My first duty is to tell the truth to the Senate and the country.

Holland, Belgium and Luxemburg having been invaded, the left wing of the French army advanced from the fortifications between Sedan and the sea and, pivoting on Sedan, entered Belgium on a line running from Sedan to Antwerp and even to Bois-le-Duc in Holland.

What did the enemy do in face of this situation, which he had foreseen and taken into account? He launched a formidable attack on the crest of the French Army established behind the Meuse, between Sedan and Namur.

The Meuse, apparently a difficult river to cross, had been wrongly considered as a redoubtable obstacle for the enemy. That is the reason why the French divisions which were entrusted with its defence were few and were spread out over a great area along the river. In addition, the army of General Corap, which was composed of divisions not so well officered and less well trained, was put there, the best troops forming part of the left wing marching into Belgium. . . .

That was not all. As a result of incredible mistakes, which will be punished, the bridges over the Meuse were not destroyed. Over these bridges there passed the German armoured divisions, preceded by fighter 'planes, which came to attack divisions which were scattered, ill-cadred and badly trained for such attacks. . . . It was thus that the hinge of the French Army was broken.

A breach of about 100 kilometres (60 miles) wide had been opened in our front. Into this breach poured a German army composed of motorized divisions, which, after having caused a large bulge in the direction of Paris, turned west, towards the sea, taking in the rear our entire fortified system along the Franco-Belgian frontier and threatening the Allied forces still engaged in Belgium, to whom the order to retreat was not given until the evening of May 15.

The day before yesterday [May 19] an armoured division reached the line Quesnoy-Cambrai-Péronne and the Somme, as far as Ham. For the past 48 hours the German advance has been going on. At eight o'clock this morning the High Command informed me that Arras and Amiens had been occupied.

How have we got to this point? Is the moral value of our Army in doubt? Not at all. The fighting which took place in Belgium during the first days proved it. The truth is that our classic conception of the conduct of war has come up against a new conception.

At the basis of this conception there is not only the massive use of heavy armoured divisions or co-operation between them and aeroplanes, but the creation of disorder in the enemy's rear by means of parachute raids, which, in Holland, nearly caused the fall of The Hague, and in Belgium seized the strongest fort of Liége. . . .

General Weygand took command yesterday. He is today on the battlefield. The conduct of military operations falls to him alone.

The Government has already taken decisions. You know its first actions. No failure will be tolerated. Death is a very mild punishment for any offence against the vital interests of the country. At a time when our soldiers are dying, there will be no more dilatory procedure with regard to traitors, saboteurs or cowards. There is no longer a place for any vested interest.

Our airmen are covering themselves with glory, and let me here thank the admirable Royal Air Force for the total help which it is giving to France both by its action on the field of battle and against the sources of the enemy's supplies.

These two great peoples, these two empires united as one, cannot be beaten. France cannot die. As for me, if I were told tomorrow that only a miracle could save France, I should reply "I believe in miracles because I believe in France."

Saturday, May 18

British front was held firmly in face of strong enemy pressure.

Fighting continued in region of Avesne and in **Vervins** area, chiefly round **Guise** and **Landrecies.** French brought up thousands of their "75" field-guns.

Enemy attacks also repulsed south of Sedan and in Montmédy sector.

Formations of R.A.F. bombers carried out intensive operations in Belgium and France, harassing German lines of communication. Continuous night watch kept on military traffic over wide area in Western Germany. **Oil tanks at Hanover** were **bombed.** Daylight attacks made on enemy troops and focal points in Northern France.

French Cabinet reconstructed. M. Reynaud remained Premier, and also took over Defence Ministry. M. Daladier became Foreign Minister and Marshal Pétain Vice-Premier.

Nazi transports attempting to relieve **Narvik** reported sunk.

Sunday, May 19

Main fighting took place in region north-east of **St. Quentin,** where French troops put up stubborn resistance. Violent attacks were also repulsed in region of **Montmédy.**

General Weygand appointed Chief of French General Staff in place of General Gamelin, and Commander-in-Chief of all theatres of operation.

Dieppe bombed during night of May 18-19.

During night of May 19-20 R.A.F. again successfully attacked oil refineries in north-west Germany. South of Brussels they bombed railway stations and bridges. Troop and tank concentrations were attacked in Aisne sector.

German aerodrome at **Vaernes,** north of **Trondheim,** successfully attacked.

Stated that at least 100,000 people were killed and a **third of the city destroyed** when **Germans bombed Rotterdam.**

Reported that French have destroyed all road and other crossings over Rhine-Rhône canal, and also all direct communication between France and Switzerland via Basle.

Monday, May 20

German pressure continued in region of **St. Quentin** towards Channel ports. French announced heavy fighting east of **Cambrai** and successful counter-attacks near **Péronne.** Germans captured **Laon.**

Enemy units which had **crossed the Aisne** near Rethel were thrown back. Violent attacks near Montmédy were also repulsed.

B.E.F. Command stated that repeated attacks by German mechanized formations in area south of River Scarpe and against the Scheldt position were beaten off.

R.A.F. carried out successful attacks on armoured vehicles in **Arras-Cambrai-Bapaume** area, and other parts of the fighting fronts. In a night raid **Rotterdam oil tanks** were set on fire.

Admiralty announced that H.M. destroyer "Whitley" had been damaged by bombs and subsequently beached.

Tuesday, May 21

Situation on Western Front between Cambrai and the Somme very confused.

In their drive towards Channel ports, advance **enemy forces reached Amiens** and **Arras.** Germans also claimed to be in **Abbeville** and to have defeated the French Ninth Army and captured its commander, General Giraud.

Intense activity of all air forces. R.A.F. bomber and fighter aircraft continuously engaged in operations over fronts in Belgium and Northern France.

Admiralty announced that H.M. cruiser "Effingham" had been lost after striking uncharted rock off Norway. Also that H.M. minelayer "Princess Victoria" had been sunk by enemy mine.